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JANUARY - JUNE 1981

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- AACC : All Africa Conference of Churches
- ACC : Australian Council of Churches
- AUCECB : All Union Council of Evangelical Christians-Baptists
- CCA : Christian Conference of Asia
- CCC : China Christian Council
- CCIA : Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
- CCMWE : Churches Committee on Migrant Workers in Europe
- CCPD : Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development
- CCSA : Christian Concern for Southern Africa
- CEBC : Council of European Bishops' Conference
- CEC : Conference of European Churches
- CICARWS : Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service
- CIMADE : Inter-Movement Committee for Evacuees
- CLAI : Latin American Council of Churches
- CWME : Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
- DFI : Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies
- ECCSEC : Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society in the European Community
- ECLOF : Ecumenical Church Loan Fund
- EDCS : Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society
- EKD : Evangelical Church in Germany
- ELTSA : End Loans to Southern Africa
- FPC : Federation of Protestant Churches
- FRG : Federal Republic of Germany
- FSPC : Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
- GDR : German Democratic Republic
- IAC : Inter-Aid Committee
- JWG : Joint Working Group
- LCA : Lutheran Church in America
- LWF : Lutheran World Federation
- MECC : Middle East Council of Churches
- NCCC : National Council of Churches in Christ in the USA
- NCCNZ : National Christian Council of New Zealand
- OAS : Organization of American States
- PCC : Pacific Council of Churches
- PCR : Programme to Combat Racism
- PTE : Programme on Theological Education
- SACC : South African Council of Churches
- SCEM : Swiss Council of Evangelical Missions
- SWAPO : South-West Africa People's Organization
- SYNDESMOS : World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth Organizations
- TNCs : Transnational Corporations
- UCMS : United Christian Missionary Society
- URC : United Reformed Church
- WARC : World Alliance of Reformed Churches
- WSCF : World Student Christian Federation
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# EPS

## Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 15 JANUARY 1981

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ITALIAN CHURCHES PRESENT  
SEVEN MILLION DOLLAR RECONSTRUCTION PLAN

Rome (EPS) - The Federation of Protestant Churches (FPC) in Italy, has presented a \$ 7 million plan for an assistance programme for those affected by last November's earthquake. In particular some 160 prefabricated houses are to be supplied to rehouse people in towns and villages of the devastated area and in Naples.

At the beginning of January, the President of the FPC, Piero Bensi, held discussions in Geneva with the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) about the possibilities of financing this programme both through the European Churches and churches further afield.

Six weeks after the earthquake, the FPC believes it is now urgent to pass from first aid to rebuilding. If the plan is financed, the FPC would carry out the reconstruction projects and try to improve the critical economical and social situation in the area. With aid from the international relief agencies and churches the FPC has been able to help almost from the moment the earthquake struck Southern Italy. The affected area is equal to the size of Belgium, and the destruction killed over 3,000 people and made some 200,000 homeless.

In the rural areas the FPC plans: at Ruva del Monte (prefabricated structures suitable for cultural and social work as well as a corrugated iron shed for lambs and drying sheep skins); in San Gregorio Magno (a school); in Avellino (40 prefabricated houses for the needy); and in Salerno (at least 20 prefabricated houses). It is also planned to repair various buildings and churches that belong to the Protestant communities in the area.

In addition, the FPC wants to allocate no less than 100 prefabricated houses to the city of Naples, where experts have not yet finished inspecting the damaged buildings, but where many buildings have been declared uninhabitable and where the number of homeless might increase to 100,000. The prefabricated houses will be constructed in groups to form small "villages" and will be integrated into the corresponding city districts. The FPC states that: "Although official channels are already acting in an attempt to meet this need, the more flexible and less bureaucratic style of the churches could succeed in quick and sound action".

The Federation informed the WCC that this programme, the most ambitious ever undertaken by Italian Protestants, has the full support of all its churches and community members (Waldensian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran and Salvation Army).

Within days of the earthquake the WCC's CICARWS launched an appeal for \$ 100,000, in order to provide help for the victims. As a result \$ 140,000 was received (half in supplies, half in cash), and was sent to the FPC for the first phase of their relief work.



OPPONENT OF APARTHEID  
DIES IN UK

London (EPS) - Bishop Ambrose Reeves, former Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, died on 23 December, aged 81. He had been Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Chichester since 1966.

Bishop Reeves had a long association with the Student Christian Movement. And was present at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948.

He became known as an outspoken critic of apartheid and both he and his family were subjected to threats and pressures. He fled to Swaziland a few days after the March 1960 Sharpeville shooting believing he was to be imprisoned for comments made on that occasion. He returned to Johannesburg in September the same year but was deported some 48 hours later by the South African Government.

In addition to his church responsibilities Bishop Reeves was, since 1970, the President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement.

EPS

EVANGELISM LEADER  
KNIGHTED

London (EPS) - The Rev. Dr Alan Walker, OBE, director of world evangelism for the World Methodist Council has been appointed a Knight Bachelor in Queen Elizabeth's New Year's Honours List for the Commonwealth of Australia.

Dr Walker, a Minister of the Uniting Church in Australia was named for his "service to religion". For many years he ran the Central Methodist Mission in Sydney and was the founder of "Lifeline" a telephone counselling service.

EPS

1981 - YEAR OF THE SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Istanbul (EPS) - The Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I, has proclaimed 1981 as the Year of the Second Ecumenical Council. This marks the 1600th anniversary of the Council of Constantinople, which adopted the final version of the confession of Christian faith known as the Nicene - Constantinopolitan Creed. "This year will give to the divided Christian Church the occasion to proclaim together, once again, the Credo of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, as formulated by the Fathers of the undivided Church of Christ", said Patriarch Dimitrios, who is recognized by the Orthodox Churches as Primus inter pares.

EPS



NEW APPOINTMENT FOR  
LEADING LUTHERAN

Geneva (EPS) - Dr Dan Martensen, the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) secretary for interconfessional research and dialogue for the past six years has been named to head an ecumenical consortium of 10 theological schools in the Washington, D.C. area. His new work as director of the Washington Theological Consortium will begin on 1 August.

Dr Martensen said he sees the new position as a way to further the ecumenical movement: "What is needed now and in the coming decades is the development of middle-level ecumenical structures, structures that connect the local ecumenical initiatives to the extensive but relatively elitist global level ecumenical activity. Church leadership, theological faculties as well as lay men and women to an astonishing degree have not integrated the ecumenical movement's advances of the past 70 years into their respective ministries. It seems to me that an organization like the Washington Theological Consortium is especially well equipped to address this basic need."

At the LWF Dr Martensen has coordinated the Federation's bi-lateral dialogues, such as with Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, Methodist, Reformed, Baptists and Anglicans (Episcopalians). In addition, he has worked in multi-lateral settings, such as the Christian World Communions, and has worked closely on improving the working relationship between the LWF and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Dr Konrad Raiser, WCC Acting General Secretary, said: "through his experience in ecumenical work with the LWF and member churches of the WCC, Dan has shown he is eminently qualified to head up this consortium. He's made a unique contribution to the development of ecumenical dialogue between Christian churches and confessions and has shown theological integrity in promoting and mediating these dialogues that will be an important asset for establishing relationships and dialogues between the theological institutions joined together in the consortium."

The Washington Consortium is made up of 1,500 students and 250 faculty members of the 10 member schools - Catholic University of America's School of Religious Studies, Desales Hall School of Theology, Dominican House of Studies, Oblate College, Howard University School of Religion, Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia, Lutheran Theological Seminary (Gettysburg), Washington Theological Coalition, Wesley Theological Seminary and St. Paul's College. Members in the consortium participate in a cross-registration of over 600 courses a year and share the library resources of the participating schools

EPS



WOMEN AND MEN STUDY  
CHALLENGES MISUSE OF BIBLICAL TEXTS

Amsterdam (EPS) - Three World Council of Churches' (WCC) consultations on the subject of the place of women and men in the church have now spelled out and challenged the widespread misuse of theology and biblical texts to justify women's subordination. This problem is a big factor in driving women from the Church.

These three specialized meetings were part of the WCC's Study on the Community of Women and Men in the Church. In addition seven regional meetings form part of the study process. Their findings, which deal with the very basis of the Church's teaching, will provide a major input for the study's culminating international consultation to be held in Sheffield, England, 10-19 July, this year.

The issues tackled by the three conferences were inter-related. The first gathering at Klingenthal, France, in August 1979, concentrated on the theological issues of women's ordination. The doctrine of the image of God was the starting point for the second, held a year later in Niederaltaich, Federal Republic of Germany. The final meeting in Amsterdam, Netherlands, 15-19 December, discussed the authority of scripture in the light of women's new experiences.

Some 100 women and men from a wide spectrum of cultures and denominations contributed their research, ideas and personal testimonies to these three specialized meetings. Among them were biblical scholars, theologians, teachers, translators, local pastors, doctors and psychologists from Roman Catholic, Anglican, Protestant and (except in Amsterdam) Orthodox traditions.

Discussions were outstanding in the degree of consensus reached at each of the three meetings. At the close of the Amsterdam conference, the WCC's co-ordinator of the Community Study, Dr Constance Parvey said: "Representatives from around the world were unanimous in affirming that the Bible has been used in the churches to ratify the second class status of women". The Amsterdam participants decided that while the problem was universal, correcting injustices must be worked out "in each cultural, social and ecclesiastical context".

A common feature of all three gatherings was the participants' concern that Christian teaching about the male image of God and the use of exclusively "male" language was contrary to the vision of human wholeness. Many, including both women and men felt alienated and excluded by it.

Niederaltaich participants agreed that: ".. an almost exclusively male image of God .. has helped to cause the affirmation of male, white, Western superiority, and to create a sense of inferiority of women and of people from non-Western cultures".

All three conferences felt that the changing situation of women in the secular world demands a "new reading" of women in Scripture. Many biblical passages portray women as strong, willing to confront injustice and challenge authority. The texts most often cited, however, give a one-dimensional view of women as either submissive and servile or as prostitutes and temptresses, unworthy of a full role in the important tasks of the Church and its ministry.

(more)



Said the Amsterdam meeting: "The burden of proof really lies with those who want to stick to a patriarchal understanding (of the Bible) and so deny equality between women and men".

Selective interpretation of Scripture to the detriment of women, it was pointed out, has many parallels, past and present. The Bible has been misused to justify slavery, to defend the domination of rich countries over poor, and still today, to defend apartheid in South Africa.

The special significance of the Amsterdam meeting was the new vision of authority of Scripture coming through. Participants saw this authority as "a loving servanthood" which liberates women and men.

"He (Jesus) summons both women and men to find their authority and freedom in Christ, and to become the new humanity in community."

Recommendations going forward to the international consultation in July suggest ways of building women's perspectives and their participation into many spheres of church life - exegesis, worship, theological training, Bible translation and interpretation, lay education and pastoral counselling. The churches, it was also stressed, have much to learn from and to share with, the secular women's movement.

A new equality between women and men in the church can improve the position of women in society by involving Christians in issues of justice for women and other oppressed groups. - Kathy Lowe

EPS



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# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 29 JANUARY 1981

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NEW COMMON FAITH FOR  
CHRISTIANS BY YEAR 2000?

Geneva (EPS) - A World Council of Churches (WCC) commission has adopted a theological action plan for the 1980s which it hopes will lead to a new contemporary statement of the common faith of Christians.

It hopes to set up a "preliminary plateau" through consolidating existing agreements among churches. These will encourage churches eventually to meet together as a universal council - the only body with authority to formulate a new confession of the apostolic faith.

The plan, which centres on a series of statements on baptism, eucharist and ministry worked out over years of talks between churches, was endorsed by a meeting of the WCC Faith and Order Commission held at Annecy, France in January.

Faith and Order director the Rev. William Lazareth said the hope for a truly representative ecumenical council and a new confession of apostolic faith "will take us up to the end of the century". "But once the statements on baptism, eucharist and ministry are accepted by all the churches, we will have taken a step which is unprecedented in modern ecumenical history," he said.

A WCC study project on the three key areas of baptism, eucharist and ministry is now almost complete. After final revision, the agreements will be able to go for decision to individual churches in 1982.

The Faith and Order Commission will, in addition, provide a practical handbook to help lay people see the significance of the agreements for their parish life. The commission will also prepare reports on the practical implications for worship, and a set of theological essays.

Studies on the statements and advances in Christian unity will be developed this year to help pave the way to the WCC Sixth Assembly in Vancouver in 1983, to feed into the theological debate there.

"It is not a question of WCC Assembly approval of these agreements", said Dr Lazareth. "They should be received not in any legal way at Vancouver, but 'spiritually', so as to complement discussion in the churches."

It is expected that the agreements will receive church assent by 1984.

In the meantime, the various types of Christian unity - including the unity expressed in councils of churches - could be seen as stages leading towards the full unity of the Christian church.

Another area for study will be on the new identity churches find after unity and how they then play their part in the church universal.

As part of its action plan, Faith and Order hopes to relate theology more closely to life issues in a long term project on "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of the Human Community".

This will mean theological reflection on the challenges posed to community life by such areas as ecology, energy, the gap between rich and poor, the conflict between generations and the resurgence of religions in today's world.

(more)



The first phase of this project is already going on. This is the study on "The community of women and men in the church" which will climax in an international conference at Sheffield, England, in July.

The study has been a joint venture between Faith and Order and the Women's Desk of the WCC, with churches worldwide involved in the preparations. It analyses the theological, anthropological, ethical, social and cultural attitudes towards the relationship of women and men in the church's life.

EPS

#### TUTU'S PASSPORT RETURNED

Johannesburg (EPS) - The passport of Bishop Desmond Tutu, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, was today (22 January) returned to him by order of the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Bishop Tutu's passport was withdrawn by Mr Alwyn Schlebusch, the then Minister of the Interior in early March, 1980, and repeated requests by Bishop Tutu and the SACC for the reinstatement of the passport were refused by the Minister.

Mr Matt Stevenson, Deputy General Secretary of the SACC has expressed delight that Bishop Tutu will once again fulfil his role on the world scene. He has been unable to attend numerous international gatherings to which he had been invited as a distinguished guest.

Mr Stevenson said that he believed that the return of Bishop Tutu's passport was as a result of the prayers of many Christians in South Africa and abroad and through the intervention of international diplomats and world political leaders.

EPS



CHURCH LEADERS FEAR ESCALATION OF  
VIOLENCE AFTER FAILURE OF NAMIBIA TALKS

Geneva (EPS) - More death, more suffering, more oppression and more refugees will be the situation in Southern Africa following the failure of the pre-implementation talks arranged by the United Nations in Geneva, 7-14 January.

Commenting on the failure, the All Africa Conference of Churches' (AACC) General Secretary, the Rev. Max Rafransoa, said that South Africa is "like an ostrich" in that it "refuses to recognize the objective fact of the legitimacy of SWAPO as representative of the Namibian people".

In a statement from Windhoek, the Executive Committee of the Namibian Council of Churches said: "We feel that the door has now been opened to an escalation of violence, murder and bloodshed", a fear also expressed by Mr Rafransoa, who said the continuing confrontation will cause "unnecessary violence and suffering".

Appealing for an immediate effort to reconvene the conference the Namibian church leaders drew attention to what they considered as the cause of the conference's failure: "We feel strongly that minor matters concerning status and/or partiality/impartiality should not be allowed to affect the peaceful future of our nation and that every effort should be made to rise above such pettiness. Endless negotiations on such minor grounds prolong the acute agony and suffering of our people, as they only increase the numbers of our people who die as a result of the war".

The church leaders reference to partiality and pettiness is an attack on the South African delegation to the talks who demanded the withdrawal of the UN recognition of SWAPO as the "authentic representative of the people of Namibia" and questioned the impartiality of the UN itself saying it had lost trust and confidence.

Mr Rafransoa also expressed the hope that the UN will persevere and continue dialogue with South Africa to make possible free and fair elections in Namibia. "It is a pity", said Mr Rafransoa, "that South Africa did not take seriously the precedent of Zimbabwe" with regard to the process of democratic elections.

In a further action following the Geneva talks' failure the Namibian church leaders "removed the seal of confidentiality" on a letter sent to the South African State President following the introduction of compulsory military service in the territory last October. The Council of Churches together with the Roman Catholic Church indicated that "in view of the nature of the opposing factions involved in the present guerilla war, the enlistment of South-West Africa/Namibia nationals for compulsory military service would result in that war becoming a civil war."

It has been reported since then and particularly during the period of the Geneva conference, that South African military personnel were "picking-up 16 year olds from the street" in a forced conscription. This action has increased the number of Namibians fleeing into neighbouring countries and means more demands for humanitarian assistance from both the SWAPO

(more)



organization and from Angola, Botswana and Zambia. (See "Namibian refugees - WCC US\$ 600,000 appeal" page ).

Namibia, a former German colony, ruled by South Africa since 1920, has a strong Lutheran tradition. The Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Owambokavango Church, together with the African Methodist Episcopal and the Anglican Churches make up the council.

A statement from Lutheran World Federation General Secretary, Dr Carl Mau, last week, regrets that the Geneva meeting failed. "A great opportunity for peace has been missed", said Dr Mau. He went on: "One of the parties, namely the government of South Africa, was not ready to sign a ceasefire and implementation agreement. That government with a heavy investment of troops and armaments, continues to impose its rule on a people who wish to end the violence".

EPS

#### ECLOF ACHIEVES RECORD YEAR FOR CHURCH LOANS

Geneva (EPS) - 1980 was a record year for the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ECLOF). During the year the board ratified 101 loans, approved by national ECLOF committees, valued at over US\$ 1.9 million. In 1979 the comparable figures were 89 loans worth US\$ 1.45 million. ECLOF is now operating with 51 committees in 49 countries. These committees approve the loan requests from churches and local cooperatives. For some years ECLOF has been following a policy of delegating the decision making to more and more of its national committees.

ECLOF was created in 1946 with the purpose of making available to churches with limited means, low interest loans to help finance projects for the reconstruction of their buildings. Since the early 1970's ECLOF has more and more financed projects in the areas of development, education, medical agriculture, crafts and social concerns, particularly in developing countries. At the present time ECLOF has some US\$ 8 million in revolving funds deposited with the different national committees.

EPS



NAMIBIAN REFUGEES -  
WCC US\$ 600,000 APPEAL

Geneva (EPS) - A US\$ 600,000 appeal for refugees from Namibia has been launched by the World Council of Churches' Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) in the wake of the failure of the pre-independence talks on the disputed territory arranged by the United Nations, 7-14 January.

Reports reaching Geneva indicate that over the past few weeks there has been an increased exodus of young refugees from Namibia to Angola, Zambia and Botswana. The principal reason for this is given as the pressures from the authorities on young people from 16 years of age to be conscripted into the South African army to fight against the South-West African Peoples' Organization (SWAPO). It is estimated that 5,000 fled to Angola during the first two weeks of the new year.

SWAPO authorities and Namibian church leaders in Geneva for the UN Conference appealed to the WCC for urgent assistance to alleviate the suffering of these people. SWAPO President Sam Nujoma in a letter to the WCC outlined the immediate needs. These include tents, blankets, food stuffs, including food for babies and nursing mothers, clothing of all sizes and soap and vaseline. An airlift to Luanda is being planned by CICARWS as soon as possible.

The CICARWS appeal has been coordinated with an ongoing assistance programme to Namibian refugees of the Lutheran World Federation.

EPS

WCC APPEALS FOR ITALIAN  
RECONSTRUCTION PLAN

Geneva (EPS) - A US\$ 5.5 million appeal for rehabilitation and reconstruction in Southern Italy, following the November '80 earthquake, has been launched by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS).

The appeal is in response to plans presented by the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FPCI) which amount to some US\$ 7 million. (See EPS No.1 - 8 January 1981). The major effort will be in providing prefabricated housing in rural areas affected by the earthquake. In addition 100 houses will be erected in Naples.

The initial CICARWS appeal of \$ 100,000 which provided emergency food, clothing and shelter, issued on 26 November received over \$ 200,000. From this some \$ 80,000 is available for the next phase in the programme.

The FPCI indicate that this new programme, the most ambitious ever undertaken by Italian Protestants, has the full support of all its churches and community members (Waldensian, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran and Salvation Army).

EPS

PLEA FOR "OPEN AND RESPONSIBLE"  
INFORMATION IN EUROPE

Strasbourg, France (EPS) - The training of religious media specialists, the fast setting-up of a monthly European religious information bulletin, and a policy of "open and responsible information" were some of the concerns formulated at a meeting of churches and religious journalists of 18 Lutheran Minority Churches from 11 European countries, in Liebfrauenberg, near Strasbourg, 11-16 January 1981.

This meeting, the first of its kind, was organized by the Communication Committee of Minority Lutheran Churches in Europe. The theme of the meeting, "Information and Proclamation", gave opportunity for the various historical and political situations in which these minority Lutheran Churches in Eastern and Western Europe find themselves to be explained. The widely differing conceptions about the role of the media and communication within the Churches brought conflict but at the end of this week of intense discussion a certain consensus was reached.

It was agreed that where the minority Lutheran Churches have access to the media, they should see this as a "forum of encounter" where different views can be expressed. Participants rejected the practice of using church media as a "loudspeaker, either for institutions, individuals or groups". This could damage the church's credibility both in terms of information as well as proclamation. "A realistic image of the church created by responsible and open information strengthens the credibility of the witness of the church", said the meeting. Such responsible and open information also enables churches to communicate wherever they are witnessing, to challenge the world, and to be challenged, instead of "retreating to a ghetto".

The consultation recommended that the committee organize a seminar on audio-visual techniques to facilitate the task of church media; help the minority churches with the training of church journalists; analyse the importance of parish publications, and set-up shortly a monthly regional news bulletin. This latter plea is a project under discussion for some time, to provide a regional information service in German for the minority Lutheran Churches of Europe.

The Liebfrauenberg consultation was one of the efforts to stimulate and improve communication, undertaken by the Communications Department of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF).

EPS



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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 12 FEBRUARY 1981

NEW ERA IN  
NICARAGUA

Geneva (EPS) - Church aid to Nicaragua through the World Council of Churches (WCC) is expected to amount to some US\$ 3.3 million during 1981.

The commitment of the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) to appeal to churches for this amount arose from a meeting between Nicaraguan church and government representatives and ecumenical inter-church service agency officials in Geneva, last week.

Nicaraguan government representatives, including the Minister for Social Welfare, Father Edgard Parrales and the Deputy Minister of Health, Joaquin Solis Piura, presented projects for financing amounting to some US \$ 8.5 million. These were in the areas of health, education and child care.

The projects contained in the WCC's US \$ 3.3 million package include US \$ 2 million for primary health care - a major thrust for the government's 1981 programme; US \$ 1 million for the continuation of the alphabetization campaign, especially adult education; and US \$ 300,000 for the Centre for Rural Children and work for marginalized children in the towns.

Since the revolution which displaced the Somoza regime in Nicaragua in June 1979 the world's churches, through the WCC, have supported a variety of programmes in the country, especially the alphabetization campaign for which some US \$ 1.5 million has been provided. These have been coordinated through the Protestant Ecumenical organization, CEPAD, in Nicaragua.

Speaking at a Press Briefing in Geneva given during the visit of the Nicaraguan representatives, Mr Angel Peiro, CICARWS official responsible for Latin American affairs said that the churches were supporting Nicaragua because the revolution which had taken place there was a new and different kind of revolution. The Christian presence is very strong, he said, not only in the ideas behind the rebuilding of the country but also in the people who are participating in the revolution.

Mr Peiro went on: "Various government ministers and other employees are Roman Catholic priests and there is a truly intense participation by Christians in the revolution. The evangelical minority is also cooperating at all levels of government action."

After the revolution the new Sandinista Front government was faced with a devastated country, with more than 40,000 dead. National reserves stood at only US \$ 3 million.

The new government, after nationalizing the wealth of former dictator Somoza, formulated a system of mixed economy with socialist tendencies and large popular participation. According to Father Parrales "private enterprise has in its power, at this moment, more than 60 per cent of the country's commerce and production".

Since the revolution too, some US \$ 200 million have been received in the country in donations either in cash or material aid. This has come from government, church and private sources, from many countries around the world.

(See Photo Oikoumene this issue)

EPS



DEATH OF A FRENCH PIONEER  
OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Strasbourg (EPS) - One of the last pioneers of the modern ecumenical movement, Miss Suzanne de Diétrich passed away on 24 January 1981, at Strasbourg, France, at the age of 89.

From 1914 onwards for nearly half a century she worked in the Student Christian Movement alongside men like Willem Visser't Hooft and Marc Boegner.

In an official tribute, Dr Konrad Raiser, the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Acting General Secretary, said: "The ecumenical movement has lost one of its brightest spirits and strongest influences. Suzanne de Diétrich personified 'the Biblical renewal' about which she wrote and taught with such passion and clarity, and thereby formed generations of biblically literate students and leaders, in France, at the Ecumenical Institute and around the world.

"Her gifted leadership in the WSCF and the WCC, during four decades, gave direction to the ecumenical movement and especially to the Ecumenical Institute in its earliest years. A hereditary and lifelong disability did not deter or limit her in any task to which she was called in her ecumenical ministry.

"No one who heard her expound the Bible will ever forget her incisive mind, her simplicity of expression and her sense of humour, nor doubt that the Bible is the living Word of God for everyone, as it was for her."

Born on 29 January 1891 at Niederbronn, Alsace, France, into a family of metalfounders dating back uninterruptedly to 1684, she studied engineering at Lausanne with a view to later managing the family foundry. It was in Lausanne in fact that she came into contact for the first time with the Student Christian Movement.

During the First World War she worked among bible students and groups of young people in Paris.

In 1920 she was member of the French delegation to the first meeting after the Armistice in Beatenberg, Switzerland, of the Committee of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF). Until 1935 she assumed increasing responsibilities within this Committee. It was the Rev. Willem A. Visser't Hooft who invited her to join the Secretariat of the WSCF in which she was, among other things, Secretary of the Commission for Ecumenical Relationships.

In 1939 she was active in the creation of the Inter-Movement Committee for Evacuees (CIMADE) supporting it from Geneva during all of the Second World War. During all her life she was the spiritual guide of CIMADE, which in the meantime has become the inter-church aid service of French Protestantism.

In 1946 she was appointed to the staff of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey which the World Council of Churches (still in process of formation) had just established near to Geneva. There, until her departure in 1954, she organized biblical study seminars and played an active part along with Hendrik Kraemer, another eminent lay person, in the preparation of the Institute's programmes in which generations of theologians, pastors and lay people, men and women of all continents, have caught their ecumenical inspiration.

DAY OF PRAYER CALLED IN FRANCE  
FOR PERSECUTED CHURCHES

Paris (EPS) - French Christians have been called to a day of prayer for the oppressed people and the persecuted churches in the world.

In an "Appeal to Prayer" leaders from the Roman Catholic Church, the French Protestant Federation and the Greek Orthodox Church in France have asked their parishes to make Sunday, 22 March, a "day of prayer for the oppressed people and the persecuted churches, under whatever political system they may be found, and in particular for the churches in Central America".

The French religious leaders have chosen the 22 March, in order to commemorate the tragic death, a year ago, of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador assassinated while celebrating the mass. "In his ministry as pastor and with a constant dedication to non-violence, his life witnessed to the uncompromising love of God for all the poor of the earth", the leaders commented.

In their appeal, which they described as a sincere "ecumenical venture", Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the Rev. Jacques Maury and Metropolitan Meletios stated that in many countries authoritarian regimes maintain their power by the use of violence. This results in disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture, and everyday political assassinations.

They pointed out, in particular, two Central American countries affected by a climate of terror and violence, El Salvador and Guatemala. But, they added: "These are not the only ones".

EPS

COMMUNITY BREAKS DOWN  
RELIGIOUS BARRIERS

Etsha, Botswana (EPS) - A village in a remote part of Botswana has developed a unique ecumenical Christian community where denominational barriers are unheard of, reports the Africa Press Service from Nairobi.

Although the Hambukusu people of Etsha, in northern Botswana, came to know and accept Christianity through an Anglican missionary priest, Canon Ronald Wynne, they do not belong to any denomination. Their baptism, eucharist and confirmation have all been formed on an ecumenical basis.

Speaking during the recent 15th assembly of the Botswana Christian Council, Canon Wynne assured delegates that although an Anglican, he had tried not to introduce Anglican influence at Etsha. He added that he had been acting as a representative of the member churches of the BCC, and not as an Anglican.

Canon Wynne said he based his work on uniting all Christians. He explains the BCC now aims to develop the church at Etsha, with ministers and lay readers, teachers, villagers trained in primary health care, and congregations that are self-supporting but also outward-looking in evangelistic zeal.

EPS



FIGHTING IN EL SALVADOR CALLS FOR  
INCREASED CHURCH AID

Geneva (EPS) - An appeal has been launched (26 January), by the World Council of Churches (WCC) for US\$ 2.3 million for humanitarian assistance in response to the needs resulting from the civil strife in El Salvador.

The appeal by the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) notes that "at this critical moment" the basic needs to be met are food, medicines, clothes and other material resources both inside El Salvador and for refugees in other Central American countries and in Mexico.

This new appeal comes at a time when the expanded fighting in El Salvador has caused the internal displacement of some 150,000 people.

Churches, church schools and institutions are being used as places of refuge by hundreds of families in the capital, San Salvador, in other cities and towns, as well as in the countryside.

Living conditions in these camps are described as "precarious". In addition, the people who take refuge there are constantly harrassed by government troops.

As a result of these disruptions, thousands of people are fleeing the country, especially those close to national borders. UNHCR report that up to mid-December 1980, some 100,000 refugees from El Salvador were registered in Mexico and Central America. The present "all out" offensive is daily increasing this figure.

In a move to closer aid coordination in the area a new organization has been formed, called the Salvadorean Ecumenical Association for Humanitarian Action and Service (Asociación Salvadorena Ecumenica de Servicio y Acción Humanitaria, ASESAH). This organization will unify the efforts of both the present Roman Catholic and Protestant relief agencies.

In April 1980 CICARWS appealed for US\$ 500,000 for ecumenical assistance in El Salvador. This appeal has brought in US\$ 755,755. This week's new, much larger appeal reflects the increased suffering brought on by the recent escalation of the violence.

EPS



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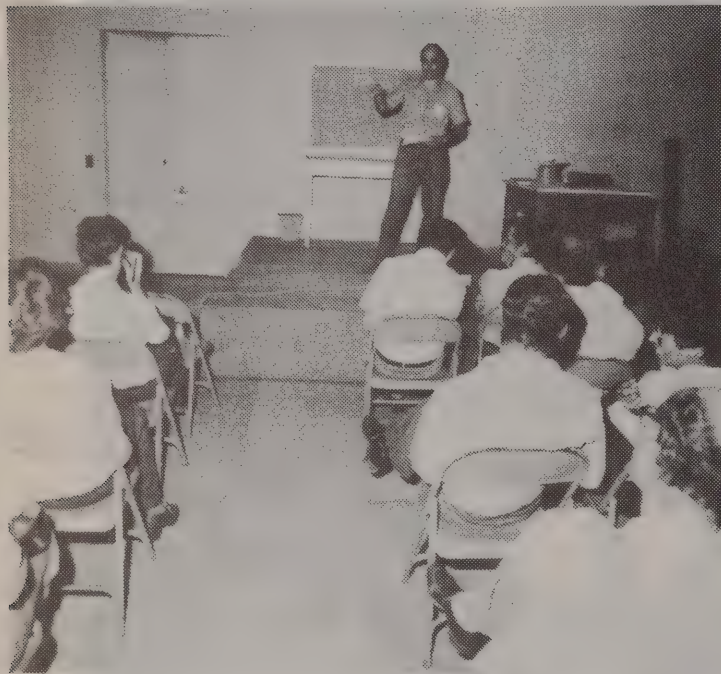
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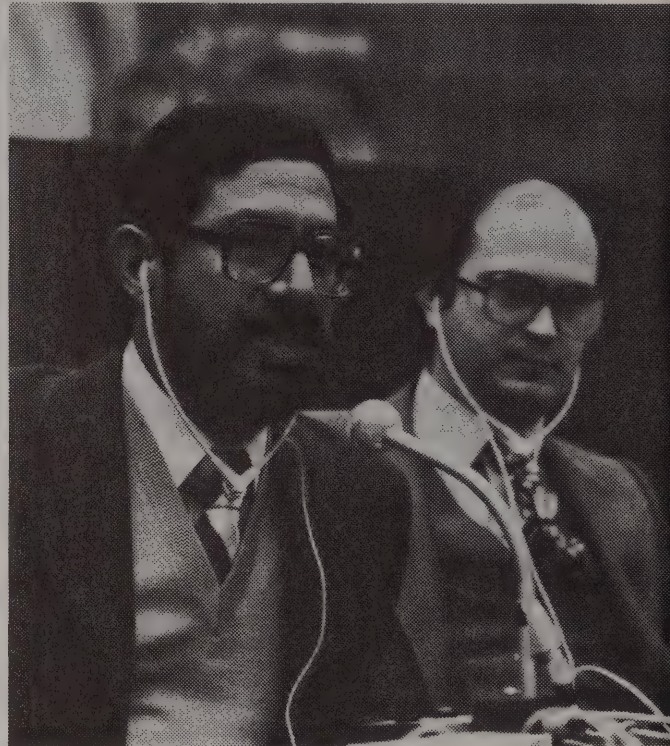




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2580

## NEW ERA NICARAGUA

Since the successful revolution in 1979, Nicaragua has made concerted efforts to build a new society. (See story this issue).

(2574, 2578/9/80) The alphabetization crusade has been a priority operation. Considerable church money has bolstered its progress.

(2575) Rev. Edgard Parrales, Nicaraguan Minister of Social Welfare (left) and Mr Bernardo Chamorro, Deputy Minister of the International Reconstruction Fund at a Press Briefing in the Ecumenical Centre, Geneva.

(2576) Dr Joaquin Solis Piura, Nicaraguan Deputy Minister of Health, explains the projects he would like the churches to finance.

(2577) Work with urban children is to receive church help.

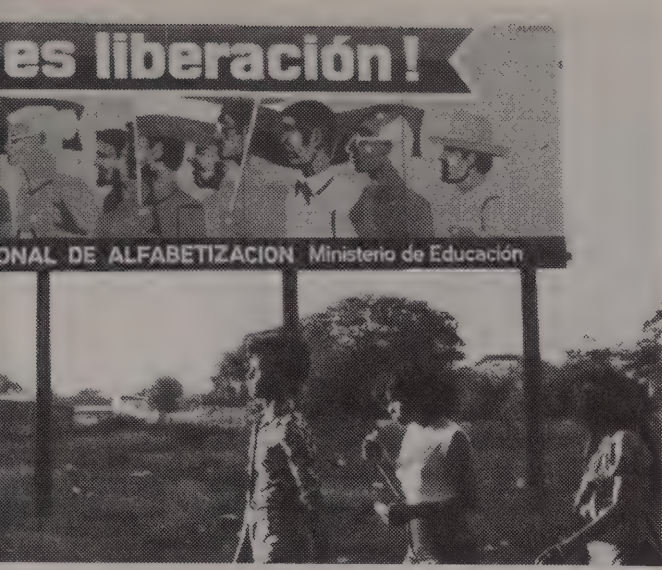
(2581) The church is closely involved in the revolution.

(2582) Rebuilding after the revolution.

(2583) Health is a 1981 priority.

(Photos CIRIC,WCC).





2574



2576



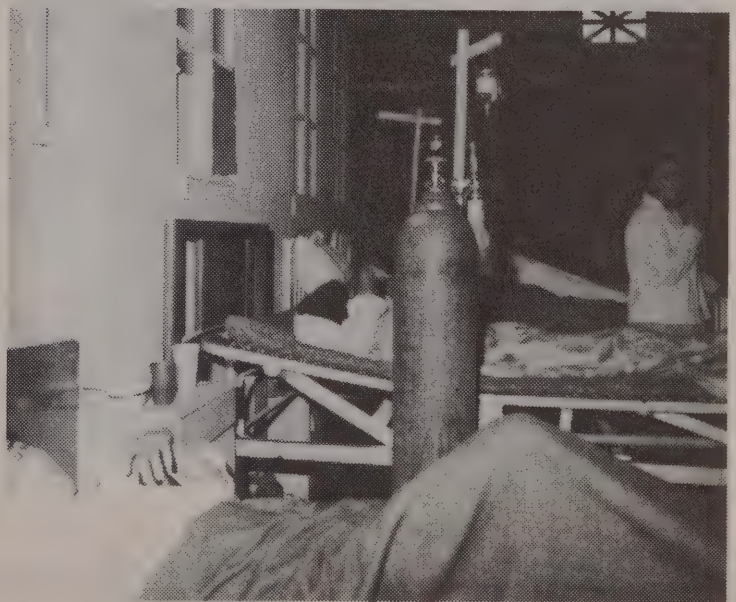
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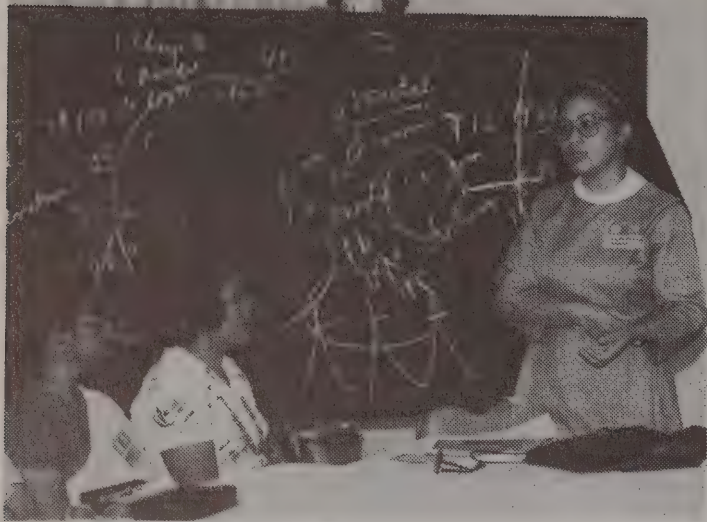


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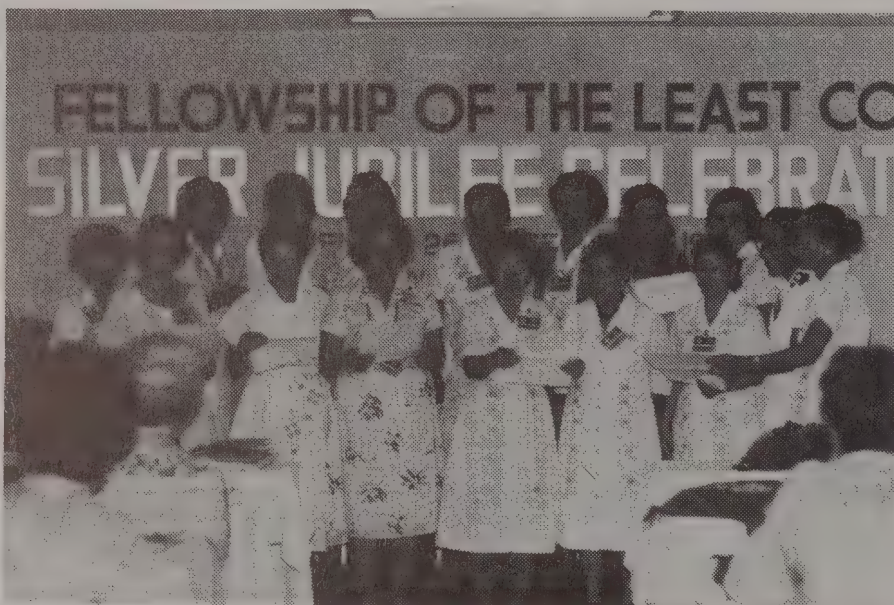




2570



2571



2569

(2569) Philippine women who organized the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Fellowship of the Least Coin since to conference participants. (2570) Sister Mary John Mananza gives a theological reflection on the church in the Philippines. (2571) A Christian Student drama group perform the play "Call to Worship" which challenges Christians to take sides in the people's struggles. (2572/3) Representatives from the USA and from Africa take part in the conference.

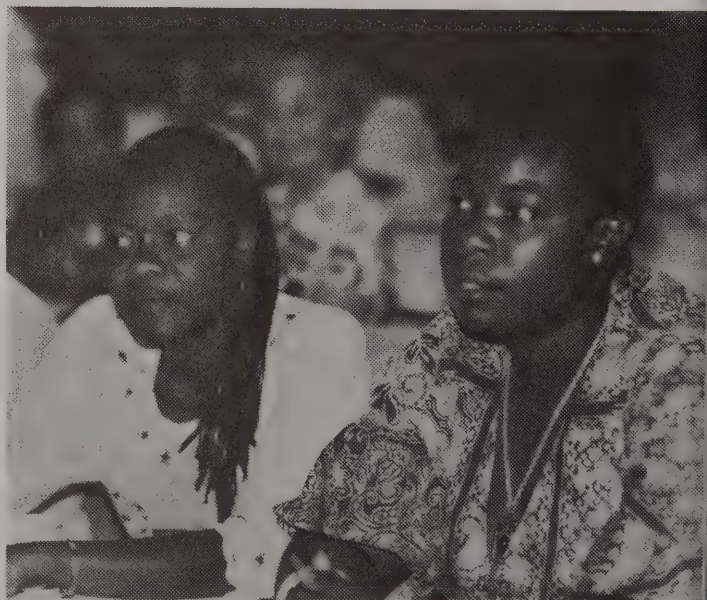
Front page: A Salvation Army officer renders a musical item at the celebrations.

(Photos: WCC)

PHILIPPINES  
CELEBRATIONS



2572



2573



# EPS

## Ecumenical Press Service

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No.4/48th Year 1981

12 February 1981

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 19 FEBRUARY 1981

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WCC TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARING  
ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Geneva (EPS) - An international Public Hearing on Nuclear Disarmament, is to be held in November 1981, in Amsterdam, sponsored by two sub-units of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

A prospectus outlining the purpose and scope of the Hearing has just been published by the Council's office for Church and Society and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA).

The Rt. Rev. John S. Habgood, Anglican Bishop of Durham, and member of the House of Lords will chair the 15-member panel which will conduct the Hearing. Other panel members, to be announced later, will include representatives of the principal theological, ethical, geographical and political view-points in the membership of the Council.

The Hearing is in response to a request of the WCC's Central Committee which at its meeting in August 1980, asked the two sub-units "to arrange jointly an international public hearing on the current threats to world peace with special focus on the increased danger of nuclear war, where authoritative witnesses can be cross-examined in an effort to assess the present situations".

The proposal for the hearing emerges from recommendations of the 1979 World Conference on Faith, Science and the Future which adopted a resolution on Science for Peace, urging the WCC, member churches and scientific groups to give greater attention to the work for nuclear disarmament, and to enlarge and support the Programme on Disarmament and against Militarism and the Arms Race.

Bishop Habgood chaired the 1979 Conference sub-committee which prepared the resolution on Science for Peace.

Expert scientific, political and theological witnesses will be questioned by the Hearing Group for their views on the following subject areas:

- The need for a global perspective on nuclear disarmament
- Threats implicit in the development and introduction of nuclear weapon systems
- the present capacity for "overkill"
- challenge to the acceptance of the "limited" nuclear war strategy
- political and military consequences of scaling down the availability of nuclear arms
- approaches to disengagement from military strategies based on nuclear weapons (including an evaluation of the multilateral and unilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament).
- influence of non-nuclear nations, especially those in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific, on nuclear disarmament strategy.

The Hearing Group will also examine the views of churches, governmental bodies, the UN (especially the recently published report to the UN Secretary General on Complete Disarmament: Comprehensive Study on Nuclear Weapons), Peace Research Institutes and groups and movements concerned with these questions. The Hearing will report its findings to the WCC's General Secretary, and it is likely that they will then be forwarded to the next WCC Assembly in Vancouver 1983.



WORLD MUSLIM CONGRESS OFFICIAL  
VISITS WCC

Geneva (EPS) - Dr Inamullah Khan, General Secretary of the World Muslim Congress, paid his first official visit to the World Council of Churches (WCC), 4-6 February 1981. During his visit he discussed the proposal for the joint sponsorship by the WCC and the World Muslim Congress for a consultation on "Christians and Muslims living and working together - the ethics and practices of humanitarian and development programmes.

This consultation is to take place in Karachi, Pakistan, in September 1981, as guests of the World Muslim Congress. This will be just before the end of the first year of the new Islamic century and would be a form of Christian response to the worldwide celebrations marking the year.

Participants will include not only those agencies in the Christian and Muslim worlds responsible for humanitarian and development programmes but also Christians and Muslims who live and work together at a local level implementing such programmes.

As well as sharing the ideals and visions that motivate Christians and Muslims in humanitarian development work it is hoped that the proposed consultation might lead to the setting-up of various pilot programmes involving both Christians and Muslims in both planning and action. These programmes are expected to be both in those parts of the world where Christians and Muslims live together, in many parts of Asia and Africa for example, and in areas where one or other communities may be in the minority, as for example in Western Europe and in certain parts of the Middle East.

The Geneva meeting was attended by an official observer from the Secretariat for Non-Christians in Rome, following up cooperation agreements confirmed the previous week during a visit to Geneva from Archbishop Jadot, the newly-appointed president of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians and his staff.

EPS

DISABLED PERSONS NOT  
ANOTHER "GOOD CAUSE"

Oslo (EPS) - No Church of Norway programme intends to initiate any special action in connection with the International Year of Disabled Persons. "Quite consciously we want to avoid defining disabled persons as another cause for the church", Mr Gisle Haugum, consultant for deaconal questions at the Church of Norway's National Council, said here recently. "We rather wish to strengthen projects already in existence", he added.

Mr Haugum said there is a wish that the church should focus on itself and on how individual congregations meet the needs of disabled persons: their access to church buildings, listening facilities and church presence in institutions, for example. Mr Haugum also underlined that these are matters which should be as important this year as any other year.

EPS

#### WAITANGI DAY QUESTIONED

Auckland (EPS) - "The whole use of Waitangi Day as the New Zealand national day should be seriously re-examined" says a statement from the Church & Society Commission of the National Council of Churches in New Zealand.

"Most pakeha New Zealanders think of the so-called Treaty of Waitangi as the historic basis of good legal relationships between themselves and the Maori people. They are apparently entirely ready to ignore the unquestionable facts: firstly, that it has never been ratified by either the New Zealand or British governments; secondly, that it has never been honoured in the sense of providing any protection for the Maori rights to land, and it is in no sense a legal instrument for that purpose.

Increasingly there is anger among many Maori people, and others, about the whole tradition of Waitangi, and the honouring of it as the occasion for our national holiday. There is no meaning in pressing for the ratification of the "Treaty" now, since its purposes could no longer be fulfilled. But at least let there be serious questions raised and honestly faced. Questions such as: "In what sense is the making of Waitangi Day our national holiday anything but a hurtful mockery in view of an aspect of our history of which many of us are increasingly ashamed?

It is our conviction that the discussion of such issues is of fundamental importance to our whole commitment to the achievement of a truly multi-cultural society of respect in this country. Only on the basis of honesty can we ever be "two peoples, one nation".

Waitangi Day is celebrated on 6 February each year. The present Maori population of New Zealand is some 300,000 or 10 per cent of the total population.

EPS

#### DISCIPLES PROTEST US REMOVAL OF EL SALVADOR AMBASSADOR

Indianapolis, USA (EPS) - The overseas executive of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has criticized the removal of the United States Ambassador to El Salvador, calling the action a blow to human rights.

In a telegram to President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Dr Robert A. Thomas, Indianapolis, Ind., called Ambassador Robert White's removal "a disgrace for the US and a blow to the hopes of the poor and oppressed everywhere".

Disciples have been working through the National Council of Churches in the US in its efforts to "bring healing and encourage development of a more democratic society with more hope for the peasants in El Salvador", said Dr Thomas.

EPS



CHURCH UNION CONSULTATION  
- FOURTH ROUND

Geneva (EPS) - "There is no miracle recipe by which the churches can jump from disunion into unity - but there are models of union experienced by certain churches and we want to see how they have made out in practice and can be used for other schemes", declared Dr Michael Kinnamon of the Faith and Order Secretariat of the World Council of Churches (WCC), in announcing that an international Consultation of United and Uniting Churches will be held, 18-25 November in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Consultation will bring together approximately 50 representatives from united churches and church union negotiating committees. This will be the fourth meeting of its kind organized since 1967 by the WCC's Faith and Order Secretariat.

The Colombo meeting will review the union agreements achieved among different churches of the same country or region; it will analyse the obstacles and will formulate some suggestions (doctrinal, structural, administrative etc.) the churches have to meet in order for a union to succeed, or, in other words the essential pre-requisites for a successful union.

At the same time, participants will be appraised of the difficulties local church communities encounter in such a union. Union decisions are usually taken by theologians and leaders of the concerned churches. A crucial question to be raised said Dr Kinnamon is how can a paper union become a union of heart, spirit and faith for church believers? He added that sometimes the churches delay union agreements - like the churches of Ghana - in order to have more time to prepare the faithful.

However, once the churches are united, this is not the end of their task. What are the obstacles they have to cope with on the long road towards unity? How can such growth in consensus help united churches to realize their own catholicity and their relationship to the church universal?

The present kind of church union has been existing for fifty years. They were drawn more to people's attention when the union of three large churches into the Church of Southern India took place in 1947. The creation of this church remains a model, even today, for many churches in Africa and Asia. Since then, no less than 75 churches have successfully accomplished union into 25 churches. In addition, a hundred churches in 17 countries, and of different confessions are in the course of negotiations.

A lively discussion is anticipated in Colombo when the participants debate the relationship between 'organic union' and current proposals for 'conciliar' and 'covenantal' fellowship.

EPS

MAJOR EUROPEAN ECUMENICAL CONFERENCE  
PLANNED FOR NOVEMBER

Geneva (EPS) - A second major ecumenical conference bringing together representatives of all the main Christian confessions in both Eastern and Western Europe is to be held next November at Løgumkloster, Denmark. It is being organized jointly by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CEBC). The first such joint ecumenical conference was held at Chantilly, France in April 1978.

The Løgumkloster meeting will be characterized by a strong emphasis on prayer and the spiritual life of the different Christian traditions. It will discuss how the Churches together can more effectively proclaim in Europe their message of peace, reconciliation and hope, and will seek ways of developing in practice its mission of service to the peoples of Europe.

Details of the Løgumkloster meeting, to be held from 16 to 20 November, involving some 80 participants, were announced following a recent meeting at Beienrode, near Brunswick, Federal Republic of Germany, of the joint committee of the CEC and CEBC.

The two co-chairmen of the joint committee are the Rev. André Appel of Strasbourg, and Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster.

EPS

NICARAGUAN LITERACY CAMPAIGN  
NOMINATED FOR NOBEL PRIZE

London (EPS) - The Nicaraguan literacy campaign and its director, the Jesuit Father Fernando Cardenal (brother of the poet Father Ernesto Cardenal who is the country's Minister of Culture), have been nominated for the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize by 117 British members of Parliament - 107 Labour, five Liberal and five Conservative.

Also signing the letter are five members of the European Parliament (all Labour), nine Peers and seven trade unionists.

The signatories include Labour party leader Michael Foot and Liberal party leader David Steel.

In their letter of nomination the signatories point out that in a five-month campaign illiteracy in Nicaragua fell from 50 to 12 per cent of the population. The campaign has already been recognized by UNESCO with the award of its 1980 prize for literacy.

"We believe that the transformation of Nicaragua from a country at war with itself to a country at war with illiteracy was a staggering achievement which fully merits the award of the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize to Fernando Cardenal and the Nicaragua Literacy Campaign", the letter concludes.

EPS



ORTHODOX PATRIARCH PLEADS THE CAUSE  
OF JERUSALEM AND LEBANON AT ISLAMIC SUMMIT

Taif, Saudi Arabia (EPS) - A passionate plea for peace and justice for Jerusalem and Lebanon was made by Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch to the Islamic summit meeting in Taif, Saudi Arabia, which ended on 27 January.

"Jerusalem and Lebanon are two poles in the Arab world, two pillars, two necessities for any security", said His Beatitude Ignatius IV, of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch. The Patriarch is also President of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) which groups together 18 Orthodox, Protestant and Anglican churches in the region.

During his stay in Taif, where he had been invited as an observer to the conference by King Khaled of Saudi Arabia, the information department of the MECC reported that the Prelate had various meetings with Islamic state leaders.

The Patriarch's predecessor, Patriarch Elias IV, attended the previous Arab summit in 1974 in Lahore, Pakistan.

Patriarch Ignatius's speech was based on the worship of the one God and the concern for peace, justice and love, which are common to both Christians and Muslims.

The Patriarch continued: "Jerusalem, is the place where, when we pray we recognize others as brothers. Jerusalem has a spiritual, religious and human face. May God prevent it from becoming a face which is exclusively political."

The Patriarch also asked the question: "In Jerusalem the Palestinians feel at home. Should we allow that they be transformed into visitors or transit passengers only?"

As regard the Lebanon "where unity, well-being and security are a right" Patriarch Ignatius IV said: "The wounds are too great to be healed by lamentations and condolences". He reminded the participants in the Taif summit that "our unity is affected by the unity of Lebanon, our well-being depends on theirs".

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 26 FEBRUARY 1981

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WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MAKES WIDE RANGING REVIEW

Geneva (EPS) - Planning for the Sixth Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1983 and support for the more immediate struggle of the churches and people in Namibia and El Salvador featured high on the agenda of the WCC's Executive Committee meeting in Geneva from February 9-13.

The 25-member committee meets twice annually to review the WCC's programmes in preparation for the next Central Committee (this year in August, in Dresden, GDR).

Plans for the next assembly of the WCC were outlined in a first report from a 15-member international committee appointed to direct assembly preparations, moderated by Miss Pauline Webb of the UK.

The report described an extensive programme of pre-assembly consultations and visits among and between member churches. This will enable them to begin assembling 18 months before the Vancouver, Canada event - shaping its style and agenda and reflecting together on the Assembly theme "Jesus Christ - the life of the world".

The "life" theme is still being defined and elaborated but the Executive made a start with a first listing of major concerns that relate the theme to the ecumenical agenda. In addition, they endorsed plans for a reflection process that will follow a series of biblical images such as the way to life, water of life, breath of life, birth, re-birth, resurrection and hiddenness of life in Christ. Bible study materials that develop this approach will be published later this year.

Plans were also developed for a more simplified structure than that of earlier assemblies, with an emphasis on smaller work groups whose discussions will feed into plenary sessions through a series of clusters.

The Executive Committee reaffirmed earlier positions on Namibia and El Salvador, taken at the WCC's Central Committee meeting last August.

On Namibia, the Executive Committee called for increased pressure on governments to implement the United Nations plan for free and fair elections. It also urged comprehensive sanctions against South Africa as it continues to block the plan.

Prayerful support for the Namibian churches was assured "as they continue to affirm Christ's victory over sin and evil as the motive power for their struggle". A special WCC appeal for humanitarian assistance to victims of the conflict was underlined.

Similar support, through both prayer and humanitarian aid, was expressed for the people of El Salvador where direct military assistance to the country, from various sources, has increased violence and oppression, including severe attacks on clergy and lay people. Reports of increased military and other support by the US government to El Salvador were viewed with particular alarm.

The full texts of both statements are printed in this issue of the Ecumenical Press Service, along with a public statement from the Executive on the churches' observance of the International Year of Disabled Persons.

(more)

This statement lists the progress already made by the churches and the WCC in helping to mobilise new programmes, then goes on to stress the need for preventive efforts, early health care, remedial and rehabilitative measures.

At least 450 million people today are mentally or physically disabled, says the statement. Some 80% of these people live in the developing world where inadequate nutrition of mothers and malnutrition of children form two major causes of disability.

Concerning forthcoming WCC meetings and consultations, the Executive affirmed the special importance of the international consultation on the Community of Women and Men in the Church, planned for July in Sheffield, UK. It also endorsed plans for a Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament in Amsterdam this November and a consultation in Hong Kong this December on ideologies. Special commendation was given to a recent appeal launched by the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid for reconstruction of church buildings in Vietnam.

On relationships with the Roman Catholic Church, the Executive Committee heard progress reports on the activities of the Joint Working Group that co-ordinates this area of ecumenical relationships. The committee saw the group's statement on Common Witness as a promising focus for future Roman Catholic - WCC collaboration.

The possibility of a visit of Pope John Paul II to Geneva that would include a visit to the WCC headquarters was also covered. The committee welcomed that possibility and urged that the style and duration of such a visit should "make it a genuine ecumenical event and a sign of encouragement in the present state of the ecumenical movement". Discussion with the Vatican on a papal visit is still proceeding and no details have been finalized.

An extensive financial report filled the final afternoon of the meeting. The Committee's assessment confirmed further progress towards the target of a balanced budget for the WCC by 1983.

Special attention was given to applying the policy of the WCC, established in 1972, against depositing sums in banks doing business in South Africa. The policy, taken up by many churches and ecumenical bodies, has required renewed efforts by the WCC as foreign investment in apartheid goes on increasing, however covertly.

The committee heard a report on correspondence of the WCC with the banks it uses, restating WCC policy and seeking updated information, then approved a comprehensive set of criteria that will guide the selection and use of banking facilities. Specific recommendations on possible fund withdrawals and alternative banking services will be brought to the August meeting of the Executive Committee.

In addition to this action, WCC co-sponsorship was approved for a seminar on bank loans to South Africa initiated by the United Nations Centre Against Apartheid.

Chairing the five-day session of the Executive Committee was WCC moderator and Canadian Anglican Archbishop Edward W. Scott, supported by vice-moderators Ms Jean Skuse, General Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches and his Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos-Coadjutor of Cilicia, Armenian Orthodox Church.

They were assisted by the WCC's Acting General Secretary, Dr Konrad Raiser, replacing General Secretary, Dr Philip Potter, who is on sabbatical leave until Easter.



DOCUMENTATION FROM  
WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
9-13 February 1981

STATEMENT ON NAMIBIA

1. The Churches in Namibia have increasingly become targets of attack from the South African authorities as a result of their identification with the people of Namibia in their struggle for independence. In a statement of January 15, 1981, the Executive Committee of the Namibian Council of Churches (representing the majority of the people of Namibia) expressed "its deepest disappointment at the failure of the conference on Namibia held in Geneva under UN auspices in January. The statement appealed to "all Christians throughout the world to pray without ceasing for the peace of Namibia".
2. The Central Committee of the WCC, in its statement on Namibia in August 1980, said that "the implementation of the plan (the UN plan for Namibia) remains paralysed by South Africa's continued intransigence". It called upon its member churches to "encourage and support the Council of Churches in Namibia in the exercise of their prophetic ministry", "increase pressure upon the members of the United Nations Security Council, especially those from the West, for a speedy implementation of the UN Resolution 435 (1978)" and to reaffirm support for the UN position on SWAPO "as the authentic representative of the Namibian people".  
(Text of the Statement follows)
3. Development related to Namibia during the period after the Central Committee have made the situation extremely serious, destroying hopes for an early settlement of the conflict and prolonging the agony of the Namibian people. The "pre-implementation conference" on Namibia failed because the government of South Africa refused to sign a cease-fire agreement and blatantly defied the UN. The SWAPO declared its willingness to comply fully with the UN resolution and to sign the cease-fire agreement immediately.
4. While intensifying repression inside Namibia, South Africa's operations in Southern Angola have been extended in such a way that it is now waging a full-scale war, deliberately killing and terrorising Angolan citizens in any area where SWAPO might find support. As part of a strategy of destabilisation of the front-line states, South Africa is also attacking other countries including Mozambique.
5. A new aspect of concern in Namibia, especially for the churches, is the illegal conscription of young Namibians over 16 years of age for service in the territorial militia under white South African officers. As the Churches of Namibia pointed out in a petition to the President of South Africa this has resulted in the immediate exodus of a large number of young people and "the further polarization of the people of the territory".
6. The Executive Committee calls upon its member churches
  - to reaffirm their support to the churches and people of Namibia in all their efforts to achieve freedom and justice for their country;
  - to support generously programmes for humanitarian assistance to the victims of the conflict inside Namibia, Angola and neighbouring countries, in particular by supporting the CICARWS appeal of January 1981;
  - to increase pressure, by concerted efforts, on governments of their countries, especially the Western governments, to ensure that there is no further delay in the implementation of the UN plan for Namibia and to impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions on South Africa (including a withdrawal of investments, an end to bank loans, arms embargo and oil sanctions) since it continues to block the implementation of the plan.

The Executive Committee assures the Churches in Namibia that at this critical time in the history of their country, as they continue to affirm Christ's victory over sin and evil as the motive power for their struggle, they are being upheld in intercessory prayers by churches around the world.

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The following text was adopted by the CENTRAL COMMITTEE of the World Council of Churches at its meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 14-22 August 1980.

STATEMENT ON NAMIBIA

1. Three years of negotiations between the United Nations and South Africa, between the United Nations and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and between the five-nation Western contact group (United States, F.R.G., France, Britain and Canada) and South Africa have still not resulted in the holding of free and fair elections in Namibia as envisaged by the United Nations plan. The implementation of this plan remains paralyzed by South Africa's continued intransigence.
2. In spite of all parties agreeing to the creation of a demilitarized zone between Angola, Zambia and Namibia, and despite some progress on Security Council Resolution 435 (providing for a United Nations controlled cease-fire followed by elections leading to independence) there seem to be more obstacles now in the way of a Namibian settlement than before. These obstacles are:
  - i) The South African demand that SWAPO bases inside Namibia be eliminated, and
  - ii) The South African demand that the United Nations General Assembly position of SWAPO as the authentic representative of the Namibian people be dropped and that "all participants in the political process be placed on an equal footing".
3. In violation of United Nations Decree No.1 prohibiting the prospecting, exploitation and exportation of Namibian mineral deposits without the consent of the United Nations Council for Namibia, a number of transnational corporations are increasing their exploitative activities in Namibia, including several corporations located in the five-nation Western contact group.
4. On 12 June 1980, the South African Government through its Administrator General proclaimed its own version of a unilateral declaration of independence (U.D.I.) by establishing a multiracial twelve-man Ministers Council with executive powers in Namibia. The new Council will be empowered to administer any affairs vested in the Namibian administration by the South African Government.
5. There is an increased South African military build-up and mounting repression inside Namibia. A significant part of this repression has been aimed at the interruption of church activities and the destruction of church property by the South African security forces. Many pastors, church workers and business leaders have been detained and tortured. In addition, a list of Namibians marked for assassination has been given publication. This list includes prominent church leaders.

Recommendations

6. In view of the above and in following upon the recommendations of the World Consultation on Racism held in June 1980 in the Netherlands, the Central Committee calls upon its member churches to:
  - a) encourage and support the Council of Churches in Namibia and its member churches in the exercise of their prophetic ministry;
  - b) observe "Namibia Month" (cf. the entry of Namibia and Zimbabwe in the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle) in the spirit of ecumenical solidarity;
  - c) increase pressure upon the members of the United Nations Security Council, especially those from the West, for a speedy implementation of United Nations Resolution 435 (1978);
  - d) support the people of Namibia in their determination to:
    - (i) resist the Bantustanization by the South African government, illegally occupying the country, and affirm the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia;
    - (ii) boycott the tribal elections;
    - (iii) denounce the exploitation of Namibia's natural resources by some transnational corporations.

Furthermore, the Central Committee:

- (e) reaffirms its action taken in 1977 calling upon the churches "to press their governments and the South African Government to comply with the United Nations recognition of SWAPO as the authentic representative of the Namibian people".

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DOCUMENTATION FROM  
WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
9-13 February 1981

## INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF DISABLED PERSONS 1981

### Introduction

We are already well into the International Year of Disabled Persons. International agencies, governments and individual communities have begun to mobilize new programmes which address the needs of people with disabilities. Churches have been working at this. Numerous examples could be given of studies and initiatives undertaken by individual churches.

The World Council of Churches also has given serious attention to this issue. Progress can be seen in the nature of this involvement: the Louvain statement on the unity of mankind (1971), the Nairobi Assembly statement on "The Handicapped and the Wholeness of the Family of God" (1975), the Melbourne statement on mission with the poor (1980), the studies on Health and Wholeness (1978-1981) and on the Church and the Poor (1979-1981) show this progress - but we have just begun.

### Scope and Causes

It is estimated that at least 450 million persons are mentally or physically disabled today, that is, 10 per cent of the world's population.

Some are born disabled, some acquire disability, and some have disability thrust upon them. Disability is intimately affected by and connected with the socio-economic condition of those concerned. Millions of cases can be traced to poverty and deprivation, many others are symptoms of industrialization and affluence; still others stem from war and other forms of overt and subtle violence; some of the causes are not known.

Though the nature and causes of disability differ somewhat from place to place, this is a worldwide problem, and no region is immune from any single form of impairment.

Two major causes of disability in the developing world are inadequate nutrition of mothers and the malnutrition of children which can impair the normal development of both mind and body, made even worse by inadequate provision for preventive measures and health care. It is in the developing world, where some 80 per cent of those who are disabled live, that the resources to address these problems are the most scarce; at the same time it must be recognised that in these countries some of the simplest measures can be the most effective in preventing on a large scale the development of disability.

In the industrialized world, the hazards of pollution, industrial and traffic accidents, and patterns of abusive habits have contributed to epidemics of disability. The disabilities of mental illness and mental retardation constitute a major concern. Disabilities related to aging are becoming more common in the context of increasing life expectancy.

And everywhere the societal factors that impart the "handicapping" are deeply ingrained. Architectural and attitudinal barriers as well as our tendency to sequester and exclude those with disabilities must be vigorously attacked.

### Appeal

The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, at its meeting in February 1981, expresses its full support to the efforts already being made to implement the goals of the Year of Disabled Persons.

- A. It encourages member churches and ecumenical bodies at the regional, national and local level to cooperate with governments and with non-governmental organizations including associations of disabled persons, and to sensitize their members to the needs, hopes and aspirations of disabled persons.
- B. It recognizes the historical commitment of the Church to the care and support of those who are disabled. But much remains to be done. A thorough approach to preventive efforts, early health care, remedial and rehabilitative measures are more economic and more humanitarian than the life long support of people left dependent on others.
- C. It reaffirms strongly the aim of integration and full participation of disabled persons, recognising their abilities and gifts, in the life of church and community; while at the same time affirming the need for specialised care for the more severely disabled people.
- D. It emphasizes that the Church has a particular contribution in examining and giving prominence to social and moral issues which relate to disablement, including advocacy of the human rights of disabled persons.

The Executive Committee urges member churches to pursue, with renewed focus, study and action programmes leading to preventing disabilities, rehabilitating those in need and welcoming all children of God into full partnership.

DOCUMENTATION FROM  
WCC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
9-13 February 1981

STATEMENT ON EL SALVADOR

1. The Central Committee of the WCC in August 1980 viewed with great concern "the increasing escalation of repression and violence in Central America, and particularly in El Salvador". We reaffirm its statement with force, and especially where it "calls upon the military authorities of the Government of El Salvador immediately to cease all repressive activity; affirms its full spiritual, moral, material and economic support to the churches in El Salvador; reiterates the deepest solidarity with the suffering and demands of the people; appeals to nations to abstain from interfering in the internal affairs of El Salvador; and draws attention of the member churches of the WCC to the Resolution of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA which calls on the United States Government to halt all assistance to the military and police of El Salvador."  
  
(Full text of the Statement follows)
2. We have followed with profound concern the development of events since then. We deplore in particular the severe attacks upon the clergy and lay people of the churches in El Salvador as they carry out courageous and exemplary ministries of pastoral and prophetic solidarity with the population.
3. We deplore the fact that direct military assistance to El Salvador, from various sources, has increased violence and repression and delayed the search for peace. We urgently appeal that such interference cease, and call on our member churches to press for a respect for the dignity, integrity and resolve of the El Salvadoran people to determine their own future. We view with particular alarm recent reports that the United States Government has increased military, economic and political support to the El Salvadoran military authorities.
4. We express our deep sense of community with our sisters and brothers in El Salvador, who are representative of the churches and people of that country in the suffering which they endure and in the struggle they have made their own.
5. We call upon our sister churches and communities in Latin America, nationally and regionally, to join with us in engaging in intercessory prayer, action and support on behalf of the El Salvadoran people. We join with the Latin American Council of Churches (in formation), in its recent letter to the Christian Churches in Salvador that "we are convinced that the God whom we worship and serve is the Lord of history" and "that as Christians we are called to be members of the same body".
6. We urge the member churches of the WCC to strengthen and accelerate their ecumenical support for the concrete efforts being undertaken for alleviating the suffering in El Salvador, and in particular to support the CICARWS appeal of January 1981, and forcefully to bring to bear effective pressure to end the repression in that country.
7. Finally, as we approach the first anniversary of the martyrdom of the revered pastor and Archbishop of San Salvador, Monseñor Oscar Arnulfo Romero, we echo words of his successor, Bishop Arturo Rivera Damas, as we pray that the people of El Salvador may hold to their faith and to their struggle for a more just and fraternal society, in which there will be true peace, in which fear and terror will give way to fellowship and joy.

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The following text was adopted by the CENTRAL COMMITTEE of the World Council of Churches at its meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, 14-22 August 1980 :

STATEMENT ON EL SALVADOR

The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches views with great concern the increasing escalation of repression and violence in Central America, and particularly in El Salvador. Directed for the most part against peasants, workers, intellectuals, civic and political leaders, their popular organizations and the churches, the official harrassment, abductions and detention of persons, and other violations of fundamental human rights, have raised strong expressions of protest in El Salvador, in the region and throughout the world.

The Central Committee mourns the assassination of the revered Archbishop of San Salvador, Monseñor Oscar Arnulfo Romero whose martyrdom is a witness to the power of the crucified Christ and a sign of solidarity with the oppressed. It expresses its solidarity with the churches in El Salvador; it notes with alarm the increasing threats against the churches in their efforts to protect and assist the many thousands of peasants sheltered in refuges, the massacre of innocent families attempting to flee the country and the attempts of security forces to curtail the work of the churches' legal assistance to victims. It expresses its deep concern over the fate of the disappeared, such as the General Secretary of the Salvadoran Student Christian Movement, José Guillermo Castro.

The Central Committee therefore:

1. Calls upon the military authorities of the Government of El Salvador immediately to cease all repressive activity in the country, carried out against the people, against their organization and the Church.
2. Affirms its full spiritual, moral, material and economic support to the churches in El Salvador, in the accomplishment of their tasks of solidarity with the people of that country, in their witness to the Gospel and in their pastoral and prophetic ministries.
3. Adopts and reiterates the statement of participants at the World Conference on Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, held in May 1980 at Melbourne, Australia, united under the prayer "Thy Kingdom Come", which expresses "our deepest solidarity with the suffering and demands of the people of El Salvador and of all the Latin American peoples".
4. Appeals to the nations in the region of Central and North America to abstain from interfering in the internal affairs of El Salvador, so that the people and their chosen organizations may be free to participate fully in the search for a more peaceful, more just and more human society.
5. Draws attention of the member churches of the WCC, in this respect, to the Resolution on El Salvador adopted by the Governing Board of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, on 7 May 1980, and particularly to its resolution urging

"the United States Government:

1. To halt all assistance to the military and police of El Salvador and to relocate the recently approved military aid of \$ 5.7 million dollars to medical, economic and social assistance programmes, the benefits of which should be distributed in El Salvador by civilian or international agencies.
2. To guarantee that it would not intervene directly or covertly to determine the fate of the Salvadoran people.
3. To grasp the historic moment and update and transform its traditional policy in Central America by seeking to respond positively to the popular forces emerging in El Salvador."
6. Calls upon the Secretary General of the United Nations and that of the Organization of American States to take urgent steps to investigate the situation of institutional violence in El Salvador, and to mobilize all means at their disposal to support the search for solutions consistent with the aspirations of the Salvadoran people and of their chosen organizations.

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No.6/48th Year 1981

26 February 1981

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 12 MARCH 1981



PCR PUBLISHES FINANCIAL NEEDS  
FOR 1981

Geneva (EPS) - The World Council of Churches' (WCC) Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) has just published its 1981 financial needs, amounting to US \$ 1,561,500. The requests are expressed in three separate categories: 1. Programme Projects : \$ 601,500.- 2. Operating Budget : \$ 410,000.- and 3. The Special Fund to Combat Racism : \$ 550,000.-.

In fact the three budgets illustrate the priorities established by the Central Committee for the PCR in August 1980. Thus, the project budget has risen from \$ 369,000 in 1980 to over \$ 600,000 in 1981; and covers no less than 14 project categories where the PCR intends to support the churches and oppressed groups in helping to eliminate racial oppression.

Among the activities outlined in the 1981 project list are :  
Support and finance for the churches' programme and a church consultation on Southern Africa : \$ 105,000;  
Research, publications and counter-information on racism in the Caribbean, migration and discrimination in the Middle East and the industrialized countries' foreign policies towards the third world : \$ 80,000;  
Race and minority issues in Asia - studies and encounters with Tamils, Untouchables and Aborigines in Asia : \$ 65,000;  
Racism in education and the media : \$ 55,000;  
Women under racism : \$ 22,000;  
Economic basis of racism : \$ 15,000.

The PCR priorities largely result from conclusions reached at the world consultation on racism, held in Holland in June 1980. This marked the culmination of a process of consultation carried out by the WCC for over a year with its member churches, ecumenical institutions and racially oppressed groups throughout the world.

The consultation also evaluated the PCR's 10 years of existence and the experience acquired in the ecumenical movement in the struggle against racism, and indicated what form the Churches' action against racism could take in the 80s.

In a letter to the Churches accompanying the statement of financial needs, Mr Baldwin Sjollem, PCR director, points out that : "One clear outcome of the consultative process is a new understanding that combatting racism at the world level and at home are inextricably interrelated and that we must be involved in both at the same time if the integrity of the churches' involvement is to be made clear".

The target for the Special Fund to Combat Racism is \$ 550,000 - the same as last year. The operating budget of the Secretariat, which comprises a staff of three programme executives, two administrative persons and a documentalist amounts to \$ 410,000.

A complete set of documents (English, French, German and Spanish) concerning the financing of the PCR and the project list may be obtained from : PCR, 150 route de Ferney, CH-1211 Geneva 20.

NUCLEAR HEARING COULD HELP FORM  
WORLD OPINION - BISHOP

London (EPS) - The international public hearing on nuclear weapons and disarmament organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) would help to form world opinion and thus influence the world's politicians, stated the Bishop of Durham, the Rt.Rev. John Habgood, who will chair the hearing, at a Press Conference in London, 23 February.

The hearing will be conducted by a panel of some 15 people who are still being chosen, and it will be held in Amsterdam from 23-27 November, this year.

Asked what practical effect the hearing would have in a world in which, as the WCC Central Committee had pointed out, a nuclear war was now a distinct possibility unless present trends were reversed or halted, Bishop Habgood said we should not discount the effect of Christian opinion on a world-wide basis. The voice of the WCC did have a certain authority and did influence the way people thought, while politicians were guided by the climate of opinion they sensed.

While the questions facing the hearing were urgent, they were not urgent in the sense that one had to do something next week, said the Bishop. He pointed out that we had lived with nuclear weapons for 36 years - though he agreed that we were now living on borrowed time.

Major concerns of the hearing will include not only moves towards disarmament by existing nuclear powers but also the danger of proliferation with additional nations acquiring nuclear weapons and the position of the non-nuclear nations who found themselves at the mercy of the nuclear powers.

EPS

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH ACTION  
ON ABORIGINAL/MINING ISSUE

Sydney (EPS) - For the first time religious groups are engaging, at an international level, in a conflict between a mining company and Australian Aborigines, reports the Australian Council of Churches' (ACC) information service. The ACC has joined the Anglican Church of Canada and two Roman Catholic orders in the USA to co-sponsor a shareholder resolution at the annual meeting of the US-based mining company AMAX Inc. The resolution protests the oil drilling by AMAX last year on Noonkanbah station in North Western Australia without the consent of the Aboriginal community, the leaseholders of Noonkanbah.

The resolution calls on AMAX not to participate "in any mining or prospecting on Aboriginal sacred sites in Australia without the written permission of the Aboriginal Community who are caretakers of such sites, and then only after coming to an agreement with the Aboriginal people upon the preservation and protection of the Aboriginal way of life, culture and tradition".

The ACC bought one share in AMAX in November 1980, in order to file such a shareholder resolution. The Anglican and the two RC church bodies in the USA were already shareholders.

EPS



EAST/WEST STUDENT CONFERENCE LOOKS AT  
THEOLOGY IN ATHEISTIC EUROPE

Buckow, nr. Berlin, GDR (EPS) - "How we speak to God" was the title for the first international World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) student conference to be held in the German Democratic Republic.

A group of 47 members of 14 European Student Christian movements met from 1-5 February at the invitation of the "Evangelische Studentengemeinde" (SCM) and the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR.

Theology in the context of an atheistic Europe was the main conference concern. This atheism, thought the students is as prevalent in countries with liaison between church and state, such as Norway and Spain, as in a country with theoretical atheism.

When speaking of God the students recognized a power-struggle between his life-giving spirit and the false gods such as technical-scientific progress, growth of production and consumption, or effectiveness and productivity.

Resurrection, believed the students, was the only place where any talk of God made sense to them. This sense was found in speaking of the resurrection of people who experience powerlessness but believe they are empowered to take over responsibility for their own lives. This responsibility would extend also to the people with whom they work both in the European countries they represented as well as in grass-root communities and universities.

"Speaking of God", said the students, "meant speaking of the Spirit of the risen Christ in the political and personal crises in which students in Europe find themselves today".

EPS

NEW PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM  
AND ALL PALESTINE

Jerusalem (EPS) - Archbishop Diodoros of Hierapolis, head of the Greek Orthodox community in Jordan, was elected Patriarch of Jerusalem on 16 February 1981. The new Patriarch, 58, will head the Greek Orthodox community living in Jordan, the West Bank and Israel (particularly Galilee).

The Synod voted nine to five, defeating Archbishop Vasilios, the Metropolitan of Caesarea, Secretary of the Synod. Archbishop Diodoros succeeds Patriarch Benedictos I, who died on 10 December 1980, at the age of 88. The new "Patriarch of Jerusalem and All Palestine" is known for his position against the annexing of East Jerusalem and the Israeli occupation of the West Bank.

The Greek Orthodox is numerically the most important Christian denomination in the Holy Land and the Patriarch is recognized by other churches as the doyen.

EPS

INTERFILM AWARDS AT  
BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL

Berlin (EPS) - The Interfilm jury at the 31st Berlin Film Festival has given awards to three feature films representing Switzerland, India and Tunisia/Algeria. The seven member jury also gave special recognition to a cartoon from Canada, and to the general work of a Portuguese director.

Full house (Das Boot ist voll), the Swiss film, deals with a group of Jewish refugees who escape from Nazi Germany into neutral Switzerland in 1943. In a sensitive and universal manner the movie demonstrates, the jury said, "how the indifference of ordinary people can contribute to evil". Full House is the third feature film for the writer and director, Marcus Imhoof.

In Search of Famine, from India, concerns a motion picture crew who go in 1980 to a Bengali village where they attempt to make a film about a massive famine in 1943. In a courageous fashion the film-makers raise questions about the ability of a documentary to tell the difference between real events and events created for a film. Mrinal Sen, the writer-director, works closely with the Indian Film Institute and has made 18 feature films.

Aziza, a co-production from Tunisia and Algeria, tells the story of a young woman who rejects the traditional woman's role in Tunisia and moves to a city suburb where she makes a career for herself. With humour and irony, the Interfilm jury declared, "this film shows how a woman escapes the domination of men and builds an independent life". The writer-director, Abdellatif Ben Amman, is a former assistant to Roberto Rossellini, and Aziza is his third film.

The Canadian cartoon describes the development of humankind from God's viewpoint, and is called the history of the world in three minutes flat. Michael Mills is the writer-director.

Manuel de Oliveira of Portugal was given an award for overall achievement in his films where he deals with traditional religious themes in a provocative manner.

The 1981 awards represent the 21st year that Interfilm has been an integral part of the Berlin Film Festival. The awards are named after Otto Dibelius, who served as the Lutheran Bishop of Berlin from 1945 to 1966 and the presentation of the awards are a part of the closing day ceremony for the festival.

Dr Gerd Albrecht of Cologne, chairperson of the Interfilm jury, said that while the 1981 Festival did not reveal any thematic or technical breakthroughs, "it did show the international ability of movies to examine the crisis of values and justice".

EPS



ORTHODOX MEET REFORMED IN  
THEOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

Geneva (EPS) - The Trinity, and the nature of authority in the church was the theme of a meeting held here last week (15-18 February) between Orthodox and Reformed Theologians.

The meeting was the second preparatory consultation to take place between groups of theologians appointed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Istanbul, and by the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC).

The full title of last week's meeting was "The Understanding of the Doctrine of the Trinity and on the Nature of Authority in the Church as interpreted in both Orthodox and Reformed traditions. Presenting papers on the subject were Metropolitan Emilianos of Silibri, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Myra and Professor Hans-Helmut Esser, from the Federal Republic of Germany.

The first of these preparatory consultations took place in July 1979, when President Dr James I. McCord of the WARC led an official Commission of seven Reformed theologians on a world level delegation to the Ecumenical Patriarch, Dimitrios I.

A further meeting has been planned for 1982 on the theme: "The Trinitarian Foundation and Character of the Faith and of Authority in the Church (as exhibited in the Nicene - Constantinopolitan Creed)."

Co-chairmen of the preparatory consultation are Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Myra and President Dr James I. McCord, Princeton Theological Seminary, USA, President of the WARC. Commenting on the event at an official reception in the Orthodox Centre, Chambésy, Geneva, last week, both Co-Chairmen expressed their satisfaction at the evident progress made. In addition to the Chairmen, participants were: Orthodox: His Eminence Emilianos (Timiadis), Metropolitan of Silibri; His Eminence Damaskinos (Papandreou), Metropolitan of Tranoupolis, Mr George Lemopoulos (Geneva). Reformed: Prof. Jan M. Lochman (Switzerland), Prof. Hans-Helmut Esser (FRG), Prof. Istvan Juhasz (Rumania) - in absentia; Prof. Joe McLelland (Canada), Prof. Thomas F. Torrance (Scotland), Rev. Richmond Smith (WARC, Geneva).

EPS

#### ANGLICAN REPRESENTATIVE AT VATICAN TO RETIRE

London (EPS) - The Anglican Churchman who was the Church of England's first official representative at the Vatican since the Reformation has announced that he will retire in August this year.

He is the Ven. Bernard Pawley, who has been Archdeacon of Canterbury since 1972. Last month he celebrated his 70th birthday.

In 1960, the year that saw the establishment of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, followed by Dr Geoffrey Fisher's visit to the Pope, the first meeting since the Reformation between an Archbishop of Canterbury and a Pope, Canon Pawley was appointed the personal representative in Rome of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York.

Canon Pawley was a member of the Church of England's delegation to the World Council of Churches' Assemblies in 1968 and 1975.

EPS

#### HOSPICE FOUNDER WINS TEMPLETON PRIZE

London (EPS) - Winner of this year's Templeton Foundation Award for Progress in Religion is 63-year-old Dame Cicely Saunders, Anglican pioneer in the care of the dying and founder (in 1967) of St Christopher's Hospice in South London.

The prize of £ 90,000 will be presented to her by Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, on 12 May at a ceremony in London.

"She has challenged the materialistic assumptions that underlay much of modern medical practice and reinstated the spiritual and personal methods for the treatment of the terminally ill," said the Foundation in announcing the award to Dame Cicely. "Her methods are now in world-wide use."

Dame Cicely only started training to be a doctor in her thirties after working first as a nurse and then as a hospital almoner. After graduating she worked at St. Joseph's Hospice for the dying, as the Roman Catholic establishment in East London was then called, on the control of pain, a fundamental aspect of her work at St Christopher's.

The Templeton prize was first awarded in 1973 to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. Other recipients have included Brother Roger of Taizé, Cardinal Suenens of Belgium, Nikkyo Niwano of Japan, and Professor Ralph Wendell Burhoe of Chicago.

EPS



CHURCH AID TO KAMPUCHEA  
ENTERS NEW PHASE

Geneva (EPS) - Aid to Kampuchea during 1981, at a minimum of US\$ 3.5 million was discussed at a recent review meeting in Geneva of church agencies, concerned with the World Council of Churches/Christian Conference of Asia programme in both Kampuchea and the Thai/Kampuchea border.

This aid will be concentrated in five target areas: Agriculture; manufacture of pharmaceuticals; other medical assistance; industry (especially a medical cotton goods factory), and relief for Kampuchean refugees and affected villagers in Thailand.

The renewed commitment to help the Kampuchean follows a special plea by the WCC to the world's churches towards the end of 1980 not to let up in their financial support for plans already underway in that country. As a result of that plea the WCC/CCA programme has already some \$ 1 million towards the new \$ 3.5 million target.

Negotiations are progressing for this effort to be reinforced by a closer association with the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) which has also been recently active within Kampuchea.

The meeting heard various reports on the present situation in Kampuchea, among them one from the director of the WCC's Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS), Mr Jean Fischer, who recently visited the country. Mr Fischer said that Agriculture Ministry officials expected a 20-30 per cent shortfall in food production against needs in 1981 and that there was some apprehension in the country about filling that gap because of a "fall-off in international, humanitarian interest".

The meeting, in setting priorities for the WCC/CCA programme, indicated continuation of the 1980 commitments as deserving first attention. Therefore, agriculture would receive the highest priority. In his report on this area the WCC's permanent representative in Phnom Penh, the Rev. Jean Clavaud, said that the present WCC/CCA programme was concentrated on providing Siem Reap province with assistance for its 1980/81 dry season crop. The province was faced with obtaining seeds and other supplies for the monsoon planting in 1981.

Siem Reap, he indicated, planned to increase its area under cultivation by 18,500 hectares, making a target for 1981 of 160,000 hectares of monsoon crop and 15,000 hectares under irrigation next summer. The WCC/CCA have been asked to provide the additional seed, and the machinery with which to prepare the additional land and repair the irrigation system. A team of agricultural consultants will also be sent to Kampuchea as soon as possible to assess the agricultural needs and especially the advisability of sending agricultural machinery.

On the medical side, Mr Fischer reported that the material supplied by the WCC to the provincial hospitals during 1980 had been "gratefully received" by the authorities. The government had particularly asked the WCC/CCA for help in setting up a control facility at the pharmaceutical manufacturing laboratory. The meeting agreed to make this request a priority. It was

(more)

also agreed that a visit by a team of two doctors should be arranged to assess WCC/CCA efforts so far and make recommendations on other medical help.

On the industrial side, the meeting heard a report from Mr Rene Marchandise who, in December 1980, inspected the medical cotton goods factory on behalf of the WCC/CCA. He believed that with a modest outlay on spare parts and some reorganization of the work, production of gauze could be increased fourfold and cotton wool tenfold. This suggestion was added to the 1981 programme.

Also on the industrial side a request had been received for tools for village blacksmith shops. This request, it was felt, should be met as it could have a significant effect on farm production.

As far as the assistance in Thailand is concerned, the WCC/CCA will continue to work through the Church of Christ in Thailand on such programmes as supplementary feeding in the border areas, the provision of water through new well-drilling and resettlement assistance to Thai people uprooted because of the unsettled border situation.

EPS

(See photos this issue)



MARCH 1981

No 6



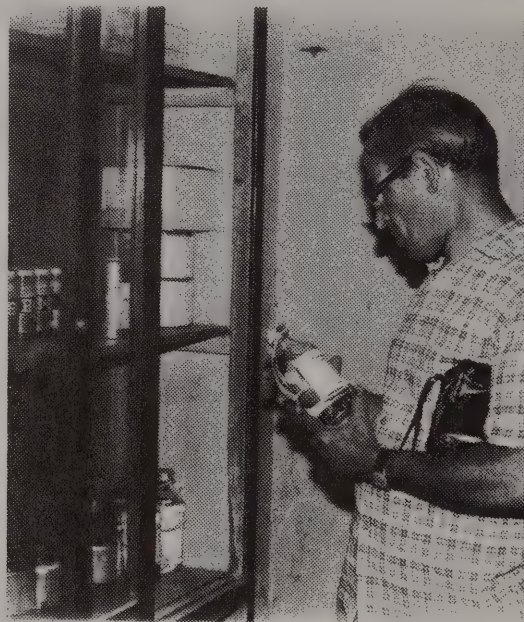




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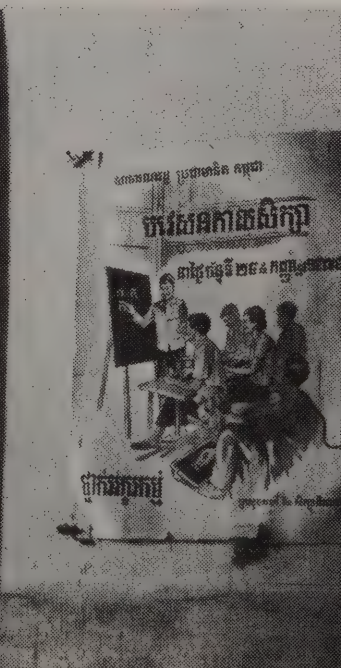


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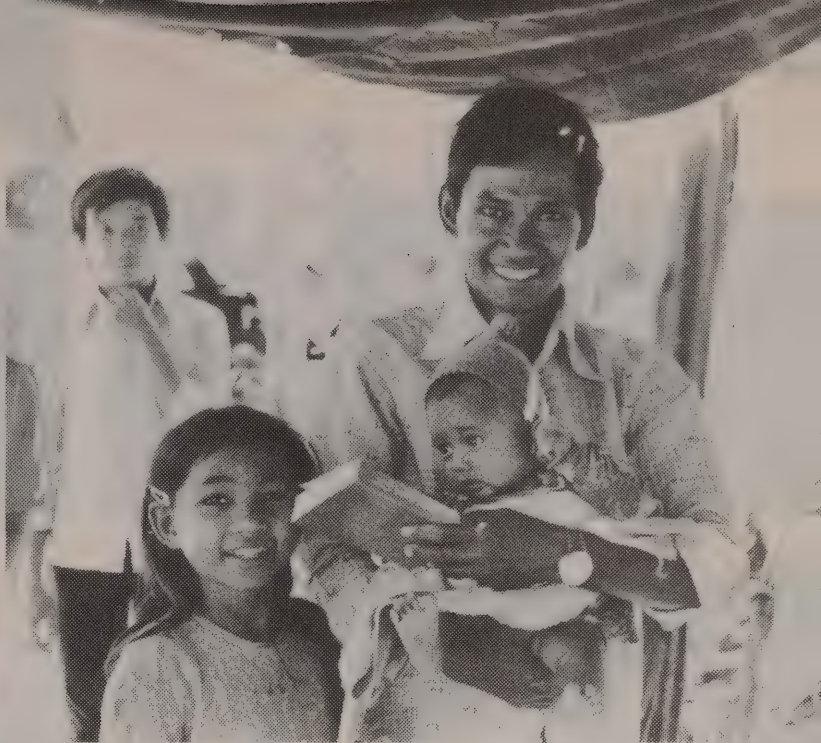
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## LECTIONS OF KAMPUCHEA

After years of political upheaval, of physical and destruction and of famine, the Kampuchean people to smile again.

National celebrations in Phnom-Penh on 7 January 1981.

Market scene at Svay-Rieng.

Where ploughing takes place, hope returns.

Transport remains a problem.

Bicycles - the WCC has supplied 900 - remain scarce.

Adult education classes at Svay-Rieng.

Mothers and infant consultation at Kompong Cham

al.

Siem Reap hospital operating theatre with equipment ed by the WCC.

Jean Clavaud, the WCC's permanent representative in Penh examines medicines made from raw materials ed by the WCC.

Protestant Christians in an impromptu service (also story in this issue)

photo: Young Kampuchians.

: ACC/WCC.



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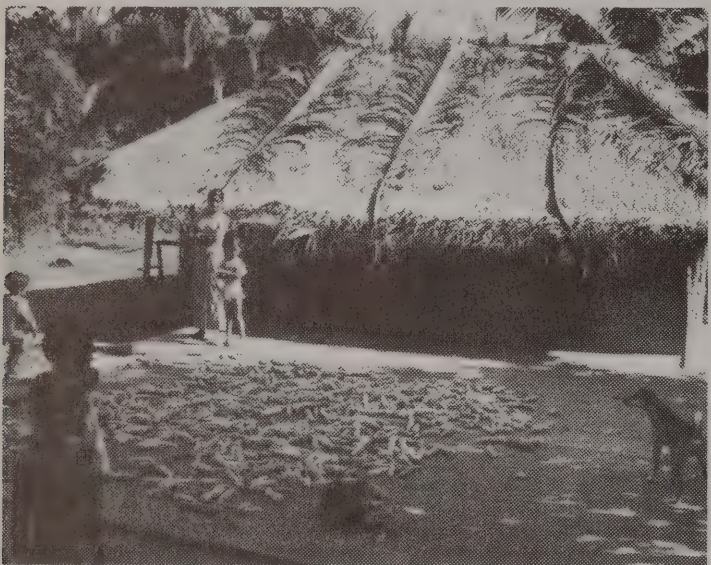




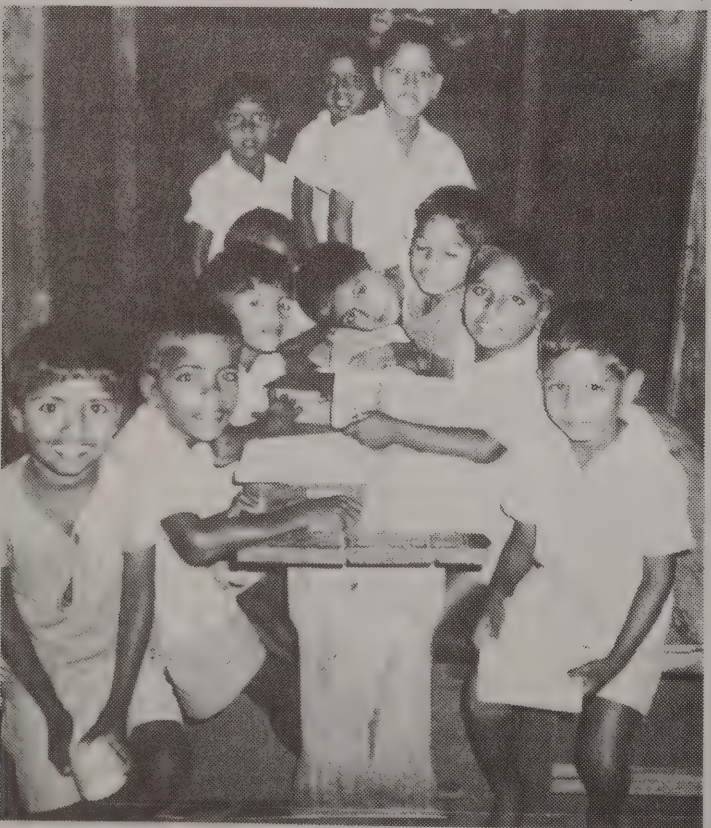
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## SRI LANKA

(2595) Tea is one of the main agricultural crops of Sri Lanka. The plantations have always drawn their work force from India, mainly from the Tamil population.

(2596) The Tamils in Sri Lanka have no official status. They are in some way stateless. In the north of the country (our photograph) there is no shortage of "illegal settlements". This enormous reservoir has been financed by the WCC to provide drinkable water and water needed for irrigation.

(2597) A village scene in Sri Lanka.

(2598) Dressmaking is a new area of activity in Sri Lanka for there is a lack of people qualified in this work. Here, is a vocational training centre run by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

(2599) In a training centre for young Sri-Lankans. This school is directed and financed by one of the Christian churches in Sri Lanka which has close links with the Church of South India.

(Photos: WCC/Tung).







# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 19 MARCH 1981

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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN EL SALVADOR  
DOCUMENTED AT UN COMMISSION MEETING

Geneva (EPS) - "The primary responsibility for the violations of human rights in El Salvador lies with the Salvadorean military regime."

This assertion formed part of a presentation made by Mr Roberto Cuellar, the director of the Legal Aid Department of the Archdiocese of San Salvador to the present session of the UN Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva.

The presentation was made in the name of the World Council of Churches' Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) which is a registered non-governmental organization with the United Nations.

Describing the situation in El Salvador, Mr Cuellar said that even "members of the present government who opposed the practice of extermination have themselves been assassinated or have been forced to flee the country".

Giving substance to his claims of "extermination" Mr Cuellar said that during the 21-month period of the previous government (January 1978 through September 1979) 727 political assassinations were denounced by the Legal Aid Department as attributable to government forces. In the three months following the coup (15 October - 31 December 1979), 450 assassinations and disappearances increased".

"The total number of defenceless victims among the Salvadorean population - not counting those whose lives were lost in direct confrontations with the armed forces - victims who have been assassinated by the government armed and security forces, comes to 8,660 documented cases. To this figure must be added the 4,400 victims of the civilian population - mostly women and children - who died in operations of 'total extermination' carried out during the past three months by the Salvadorean armed forces."

In the most recent documented report, Mr Cuellar, went on, the army and security forces assassinated 257 defenceless persons between 14-20 February 1981. In one month of martial law, says the report, 300 defenceless persons were murdered. And from June 1980 to January 1981 the army and security forces killed 202 children of whom 58 were from 1-10 years of age.

Speaking in the name of the Christians of El Salvador Mr Cuellar told the UN Commission that : "We regret the nature of international attention which has been paid of late to El Salvador. It is harmful to the whole American continent, to those governments all over the world which respect human rights, and in an increasingly serious way to world peace itself".

In presenting his evidence Mr Cuellar emphasized that it was based on the daily experience of, and copious documentation which has been gathered by, the Archdiocese's Legal Aid Department. He said that this department has "been uniquely placed to hear from every corner of our country the cruelty and humiliation the common people suffer". He also indicated that the evidence which, had been enumerated each Sunday by the late Archbishop Romero "had been subject to a rigorous process of corroboration and legal review by the Legal Aid Department" and had been effected in the mandate to his staff from the late Archbishop who said: "If they assassinate me you must continue defending the rights of my oppressed and poor people".

(more)



In his appeal to the Commission Mr Cuellar said: "It is not through pouring arms into our country that human rights will become respected. It is not through sending military advisors to improve the capacity of a regime to impose its will by force, that the rule of law will be established. It is not by distorting and hiding the truth that justice will be achieved. It is not through a war against a people that peace will be constructed".

Mr Cuellar concluded: "We call upon those now aligned with the forces of repression in El Salvador to cease their nefarious support for this war against our people, the vast majority of whom are Christian, a people which has been denied its rightful voice in such important international forums as this one. We will awaken in this Commission, and in the whole of the international community a commitment to aid us in our efforts to gain respect for the rights of all our people, including our right to democracy and self-determination."

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\* Meanwhile in El Salvador itself it is reported that a Baptist pastor was killed on 18 February in a town about 20 minutes' drive east of San Salvador, and there is still no definite word concerning three members of a Baptist Church who have not been seen since their arrest by national guard troops on 12 January.

World Vision International have announced that two of their associates were shot during a recent service of Holy Communion and three others were killed and four children seriously injured in a separate attack.

Two reports from churchmen visiting the area both call for increased emergency aid. The Rev. Dr Kenneth Slack, director of Christian Aid in Great Britain said "my strong conviction after my visit is that we stand beside El Salvador Christians in a time of terrible trial".

The UK Methodist Church International Relations Secretary, the Rev. John Hastings, reporting from Honduras says that over 25,000 Salvadorean refugees have arrived in that country in a desperate condition.

"Thousands have been wandering for a year or more in the mountains of El Salvador after seeing their houses burned by the National Guard. They hid by day and travelled by night, carrying their sick and pregnant women in hammocks. The Government forces are accused by the refugees of brutality and grave atrocities. Beheaded bodies were not allowed to be buried and were left in the rivers for dogs to dispose of. Skeletons are left hanging in the trees in the Morazon district. I saw the smoke of burning villages rising across the border. I visited several new camps on the border and spoke to hundreds of people, many of them still very frightened and not knowing if they were really safe, or whether they can trust those who provide them with food and tents".

The World Council of Churches through its Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) is supporting the ecumenical service agency in the country, ASESAN, through a \$ 2.3 million appeal to its member churches and agencies.

PENITENCE RATHER THAN CELEBRATION  
SAY SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCHES

Johannesburg (EPS) - A period of penitence rather than celebration has been called for by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) in response to the government's planned celebration in May of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the Republic of South Africa.

At a recent annual meeting of the SACC's National Executive a "Resolution on Republic Day" said that for three quarters of the inhabitants of South Africa "there is nothing to celebrate". It continued: "The past 20 years have seen intensified oppression, to the extent that the land is being fragmented and the black population of South Africa eliminated by means of the homelands policy.

"The aim of this policy is to turn all black South Africans into foreigners in the land of their birth, and to confine them, politically and physically to impoverished overcrowded ethnic ghettos. Only those whose labour is needed by South Africa will be admitted or allowed to remain, with such concessions as are deemed expedient."

The resolution said that in any historical situation the church is obliged to search out and make known the will of God for his creatures. "In the past 30 years the Church has tested the policies and practices of separate development by the Gospel and rejected them as un-Christian in both intention and effect."

The National Executive therefore, called on the leaders of all churches to treat May 1981, as a penitential season, and asked local churches to arrange "Days of Prayer and Fasting".

Among other resolutions adopted by the National Executive was one on overseas sports tours. This says that "all sport in South Africa is not non-racial and we deny statements to the contrary". The resolution goes on: "Since we regard non-racialism in sport as a desirable stepping stone to the elimination of racism in all spheres of South African society, we are particularly disturbed that overseas sporting bodies participate in sporting events while apartheid in sport is not eradicated at all levels."

A resolution on foreign investments, also passed at the National Executive, calls on all who are concerned with foreign investments, loans and trade agreements with apartheid South Africa to ask themselves "will this action facilitate or promote the establishment of full human rights for all inhabitants of a united South Africa?" In addition, their economic decisions should be based on this goal.

The SACC includes within its membership all the main churches in the country with the exception of the three white Dutch Reformed Churches and the Roman Catholic church, which has observer status.



PEACE - GOD'S MOST IMPORTANT GIFT  
SAY HUNGARIAN CHURCH AND JEWISH PEOPLE

Budapest (EPS) - The most important gift of God to humankind is not power but peace.

This statement emerged from discussions which took place here on 3 March between delegations from the Reformed Church in Hungary and the Central Board of Hungarian Jews.

While analyzing the concept of the Biblical term "peace" (Shalom), it was stressed that this gift of God is, for believers, more than a mere gift. Peace must be realized as a historical mission, the meeting suggested. God implants the idea of peace and not war into human hearts and minds, since this is the token of prosperity for humankind.

Other subjects under discussion at the meeting were the projects organized by the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the possibilities for practical cooperation between the two Hungarian organizations.

The two bodies have traditionally had good relationships. This was because both parties have a mission from God of worship and love, and parallel to this, a duty of service to humankind. The support for humanitarian programmes in Hungarian society, said the organizations, is an indispensable part of this service.

In the light of the forthcoming seventh Congress of the Patriotic People's Front, the participants stressed that it is in the interest of all believers in Hungary that national unity continues to be strengthened.

Turning to international affairs the two bodies pledged themselves to contribute to the working out of the Helsinki Final Act, to further the process of detente and, beyond that, disarmament. In addition, they condemned all trends which pointed towards racial discrimination, neo-facism and anti-semitism.

Both organizations stressed the necessity of continuing and intensifying the dialogue between world religions as well as developing the relationship between themselves.

The delegation of the Reformed Church of Hungary was headed by Bishop Tibor Bartha, president of the general synod and the Central Board of Hungarian Jews by President Imre Heber.

EPS

ITALIAN PROTESTANTS CONTINUE AID  
TO EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS

Rome (EPS) - The Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FPCI) is providing nearly a hundred prefabricated houses that will shortly be delivered and set-up in the Naples/Salerno area.

This project is financed by the various relief agencies who have responded to the US\$ 5.5 million appeal for the earthquake victims launched by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) on 14 January. So far, nearly US \$ 3.5 million have been received or pledged.

The prefabricated houses, of French manufacture, were bought in the Netherlands at about US \$ 7,400 each. They are made of wood and steel with double walls and sanitary fittings; they each measure between 56.5 and 114 square metres.

It is intended that 37 of the houses will go to the Salerno area and 60 to Naples. The Federation has employed a construction engineer to see this project through.

The FPCI discussed the reconstruction programme with a group representing the ecumenical community who visited the earthquake area 8-11 February.

EPS

OVER \$ 220,000 IN MATERIAL AID  
SENT TO POLAND

Geneva (EPS) - Material aid worth more than US \$ 220,000 has been supplied, on the initiative of the World Council of Churches (WCC), to various retirement homes in Poland.

Between 22 December 1980 and 20 January 1981, six truckloads of goods have been sent containing dozens of tons of foodstuffs as well as 5,000 blankets.

The aid operation was undertaken after an urgent appeal was launched by the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) to five inter-church aid organizations in Europe and the United States.

Foodstuffs sent by "Diakonisches Werk" in the Federal Republic of Germany and "Danchurchaid" included 29 tons of rice, 20 tons of flour, 12.5 tons of cheese, 12 tons of powdered milk, seven tons of cooking oil, 2.3 tons of butter, and a variety of fruit juices.

It is estimated that at the moment there are some 60,000 old people in state homes and institutions for the elderly and some 500 in church-run institutions. The CICARWS appeal was issued in the context of a continuing programme of cooperation begun in 1971 with the Council of Churches in Poland and the Polish Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.

EPS



CHURCH OF ENGLAND GIVES PROVISIONAL  
APPROVAL TO COVENANTING

London (EPS) - With the decision by the Church of England's General Synod at its 23-27 February meeting in London to give the scheme provisional approval, the proposal that the Church of England should enter into covenant with the Methodists, the United Reformed Church, the Moravians and the Churches of Christ as the first stage towards organic unity has now got over its first major hurdle.

Indeed, the synod was urged by one of its youngest members, 28-year old Mrs Elizabeth Varley of Durham, to "jump the fence". But a more formidable fence lies ahead which is likely to bring the covenant down. That is the need for a two-thirds majority in each of the three houses of bishops, clergy and laity when the proposal comes back to the synod in July 1982 for final approval - provided, indeed, it has meanwhile obtained the approval of two thirds of the Church's 44 dioceses.

The difficulties that lie ahead were indicated when a vote was taken on each of the three most contentious issues surrounding the covenant. These issues have already aroused opposition to the proposals from the Church of England's Anglo-Catholic wing, led by three of the nine Anglican representatives on the committee which drew up the covenant.

They are, firstly, the provision for a phasing-out period during which URC provincial moderators could, during the remainder of their seven-year term of office, continue to function in an episcopal capacity without actually being ordained bishops (though it is quite likely that all the URC moderators would be ordained bishops at the start of the covenant).

Secondly, the recognition of the other Churches' ministries and their incorporation "within the historic ministry of the Catholic Church" (without re-ordination or anything that could even be interpreted as re-ordination). Lastly, the recognition and acceptance of women ministers of the other covenanting Churches as presbyters (in other words, as equals in the ministry with Anglican priests).

All three issues were approved by about 80 per cent of the bishops and three quarters of the laity. But there was a solid core of opposition among the clergy - 32 per cent on the first issue, rising to 36 per cent on the second and 38 per cent on the third - sufficient to ensure defeat in July 1982.

Despite the hope suggested by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, in a powerful speech advocating support for the covenant, that the proposals might be able to be improved, there seems little likelihood of any changes apart from minor details. Among other things the covenant proposals also have to win the approval of the other Churches concerned.

The United Reformed Church will give its first consideration to them in May, with final approval scheduled for a year later, while the Methodist Conference will vote on them when it meets at Norwich towards the end of June.

(more)

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(more)

Anglican supporters of the covenant will now have to rely on converting enough of the scheme's clerical opponents for it to gain the necessary two-thirds majority.

In welcoming the Church of England decision, Dr Kenneth Greet, President of the Methodist Conference said that: "The making of a successful covenant could lead to a new Springtime in the English churches. This, however, will only come about if, when the covenant is endorsed, there will be enthusiasm to make it work and use it as a stepping stone to further unity".

EPS

#### REMOTE INDONESIAN MOUNTAIN AREA HIT BY EARTHQUAKE

Geneva (EPS) - Sixteen villages were carried away by landslides, several hundred people killed and about 3,000 people affected by a strong earthquake which hit a remote mountain region of Irian Jaya, Indonesia, at the end of January.

Following an on the spot investigation by a representative of the Indonesian Council of Churches (DGI) the World Council of Churches' Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) immediately sent US \$ 10,000 and appealed to the churches for US \$ 35,000.

This money will be used to supply food and shelter and to support the work of the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) which has evacuated injured people in its light aircraft and has carried food into the affected area.

EPS

#### NEW ECUMENICAL COMMISSION TO MEET SHORTLY IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC

Hannover, FRG (EPS) - The priority task for the newly-created German Ecumenical Commission will be to "give a better common Christian witness than at present".

This joint Commission between the Roman Catholic and Evangelical Churches (EKD) in the Federal Republic will meet for the first time, 6-7 May 1981. The Commission resulted from an initiative taken by Pope John Paul II during his visit to the country last year.

The agenda for the meeting was outlined by the President of the Council of the EKD, Bishop Edward Lohse, and the President of the German Episcopal Conference, Cardinal Joseph Höffner on 25 February.

(more)



Other than discussing a better Christian witness, the Commission will also tackle three points raised by Bishop Lohse when he met the Pope last year. These are the celebration of ecumenical services on Sundays, the recognition of mixed marriages and an invitation to Protestants to participate in the Catholic Eucharist.

EPS

EARTHQUAKE HIT GREECE TO  
GET IMMEDIATE AID

Geneva (EPS) - An appeal for US\$ 350,000 has been launched by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) for the earthquake stricken areas of Greece.

Three strong earthquakes between 24 February and 4 March, resulted in 22 dead and some 500 injured and caused considerable structural damage to many towns and villages. For example, some 95 per cent of the buildings in the village of Plataies (1,250 inhabitants) have collapsed and in the town of Megara (19,000 inhabitants) only 10 per cent of the buildings remain intact. Near Plataies a crack has appeared in the earth some 50-70 cm wide and 15 km long. The whole population is at present living in tents.

The local churches have responded quickly and generously to the needs of the people. In Corinth the local Metropolitan of the Greek Orthodox Church has offered 700,000 Drh. (US\$ 14,000) and diocesan priests are each offering one week's salary towards the church fund.

The ecumenical relief programme is being administered nationally by the Synodical Committee for Interchurch Aid of the Church of Greece. The church's immediate action is geared towards relief and at a later stage towards church-building repairs and reconstruction. In Perahora, all public buildings, including the school and two churches (one of them dating from the 17th century) have been destroyed.

Money from the CICARWS appeal will be used immediately to buy locally such things as food and kitchen utensils. In addition, 150 tents and five prefabricated buildings for schools and a place of worship will be shipped as soon as possible. Other items to be sent include 1,500 blankets and 10 tons of milk powder to supplement children's feeding.

One unusual request that will be taken up is the establishment of a loan fund to meet the requirements of the most needy small shop owners and craftsmen in Megara, who have lost almost everything in the disaster.

EPS

BISHOP TUTU NOMINATED FOR PEACE PRIZE

Philadelphia (EPS) - Bishop Desmond Tutu, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), has been nominated by the American Friends Service Committee for the Nobel Peace Prize of 1981.

The Quaker organization as co-recipients of the 1947 Nobel Peace Prize, is entitled to make a nomination each year.

"He speaks out courageously against the system of apartheid, so abhorrent to the world community. He shows his great compassion for those both black and white who are caught in a repressive system", said Asia Bennett, Executive Secretary of the American Friends Service Committee.

She added that "While Bishop Tutu is only one among many leaders in the movement for transformation, we feel that in naming him at this time, the Nobel Committee would greatly strengthen the position of Tutu and the work of the South African Council of Churches and give hope to other leaders".

Speaking about the SACC, Bishop Tutu said: "As a council, we see ourselves existing to work for justice and peace and reconciliation in that order. There's no use trying to cry, 'Peace, peace!' where there is no peace".

Asia Bennett closed her letter to the Nobel Peace Prize Committee by expressing the hope that the Committee will honour Bishop Tutu as a symbol of all the courageous and dedicated people of all races who are striving for a basic transformation in South African society towards peace and justice.

The American Friends Service Committee was founded in 1917. The organization works for peaceful reconciliation and supports the right of self determination for peoples throughout the world. It seeks to serve the various branches of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

EPS

DEATH OF PROFESSOR  
SCHEUNER

Bonn (EPS) - Professor Ulrich Scheuner who was Moderator of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA) from 1969-71, died on 25 February 1981, in Bonn (FRG), at 76 years of age.

A prominent lawyer, he was one of the architects, after the second world war, to draw up both church and state legislation in the Federal Republic.

Pope Paul VI decorated the Protestant Mr Scheuner with the Order of St. Gregory for "his truly ecumenical stance" during his legal career.

EPS



RELEASED ANGLICANS RETURN  
FROM IRAN

London (EPS) - During the first 52 days of their seven month detention in Iran, Dr and Mrs John Coleman never saw each other. And Miss Jean Waddell, the third Anglican Church missionary detainee released at the end of February spoke of her isolation and complete ignorance of what was happening.

For the first 27 days of his captivity Dr Coleman had nothing to read, not even a Bible. When he obtained one he read it through five times. His wife Audrey had with her his pocket New Testament, which she read constantly. It was, said Dr Coleman, at a Press Conference on his return to London, not exactly a pleasant experience but God had taught them a lot. They showed no sign of rancour or bitterness. Mrs Coleman said their revolutionary guards were very considerate.

The Colemans would like to return to Yazd, where they had been running a medical centre, if they were wanted by the church and if the Iranian authorities would allow them to do so. Dr Coleman said that he understood that the senior mullahs of Yazd had drawn up a petition asking them to return.

Explaining the background to the Anglicans' detention, the Archbishop of Canterbury's special representative, Mr Terry Waite, said that he had seen a file of forged letters and documents purporting to implicate the Anglicans in carrying explosives and in subversive activity generally. He had also met the man who had since been charged with the forgeries, an Iranian Anglican called Shahpur Purpashang.

One benefit of the final hitch over the release, delaying their departure from 25 to 27 February, said Dr Coleman, had been that he had been able to ring each of the four Iranian Anglicans detained along with them and verify that they had been able to return to their homes. He had earlier made up his mind not to accept release unless the four Iranians - two priests and two laymen - were released too.

EPS

NEW APPOINTMENT TO SUDAN  
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Khartoum (EPS) - The Rev. Clement Janda, Associate General Secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches has been elected General Secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches.

Mr Janda has been with the AACC for the last five years. He holds a Masters Degree in Theology from Austin Seminary, United States, having obtained a Bachelors Degree in Sociology, Religion and History from Makerere University in Uganda and a Diploma in Theology from Bishop Tucker College in Uganda.

EPS

## NEW STAFF APPOINTMENTS AT THE WCC

Geneva (EPS) - The following new staff appointments have been made at the World Council of Churches' headquarters:

- Wesley ARIARAJAH: 39, a Methodist minister from Sri Lanka has been programme secretary of the sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies since 1 January, 1981. He was Vice-Moderator of the WCC's Commission on Faith & Order. From 1966-80 he held various pastoral positions in Sri Lanka, and was also district chairman of the North and East District of the Methodist Church.
- Anwar M. BARKAT: is to be director of the Programme to Combat Racism as from 1 May. He succeeds Baldwin Sjollema. From 1970-78 Professor Barkat, 46, was the Principal of Forman Christian College, Lahore, Pakistan, since then he has been a consultant for education for development in New York. He holds degrees in political science, theology and social ethics. He has been a member of the Central and Executive Committees of the WCC since the 1975 Assembly in Nairobi, as well as Moderator of Unit II, Justice and Service.
- Jacques BLANC: A member of the French Reformed Church, is to become a consultant to the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development. He will be responsible for liaising with the Roman Catholic Church on behalf of Unit II, Justice and Service. The Rev. Jacques Blanc, 45, has held various positions in Algeria and is now President of the Church of Algeria. He has been a member of the WCC's Central Committee since the 1975 Assembly in Nairobi.
- Dan-Ilie CIOBOTEA: has been lecturing at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, near Geneva since September 1980. The 29 year old Rumanian Orthodox holds degrees from the Orthodox Theological Faculty, Sibin, Rumania and the Protestant Faculty, Strasbourg. He specialized in systematic ecumenical theology in Freiburg, FRG.
- Wai-Man Raymond FUNG: will take up his position as secretary for evangelism with the Commission for World Mission and Evangelism next autumn. He was born in 1940 and since 1979 has been an executive secretary with the Hong Kong Christian Council. Prior to that he was director of the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee. He replaces Dr John Kurewa, who last November was appointed Secretary of Parliament in Zimbabwe.
- Samuel ISAAC: born in India in 1938, has taken up the post of secretary for ecumenical sharing of personnel. Since 1975 he has been consultant for the South East Asia region of the Lutheran Church in America. Prior to that he was secretary for Inter-Church Aid and Health Concerns of the East Asia Christian Conference as well as Director of the Asian Christian Service Programme of the same conference. From 1960-68 he worked for the service and development agency of the National Christian Council of India.

(more)



- Monique McCLELLAN: has taken up the position of radio producer in the news and information office from 1 March. She is 41, and of German nationality. Since the beginning of January 1979 she has been chief editor of Heinemann Educational Books. Prior to that she was a freelance writer, and correspondent for Religious News Service in Hong Kong. She studied at the Boston University, School of Public Communication and Interpreter's School, Geneva.
- David H. PHILPOT: will take up the position of programme secretary in the scholarships department in May 1981. He was born in 1929 and is a minister of the Church of Scotland. Since 1966 he has been on the National Christian Council of Kenya Scholarships Committee and has lived in that country since 1956. For the last 10 years he has been Dean of Studies at St. Paul's United Theological College, Limuru, Kenya.
- Suzy A. RAMAMONJISOA: born in 1936 in Madagascar, has been appointed consultant for the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development and will be in charge of the coordination of studies and research. She has been in charge of the Department of Human Sciences at the National Research Centre, Tsimbazaza, Madagascar. She has also attended several UNESCO Conferences and published various scientific, cultural and social papers.
- Caroline-Jeannette REUVER-COHEN: has been the WCC's documentalist since 1 January. Born in Amsterdam in 1931, she holds a doctorate in Romance Languages and in Theology. From 1975-80 she was distribution manager of IDOC International, Rome, and from 1969-71 head of the documentation and translation department of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, Vatican.
- Carlos A. SINTADO: has been appointed assistant director of the sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life. He has a special responsibility for liaison with lay training centres. As a minister of the Methodist Church in Argentina, he was previously the director of the Ecumenical Christian Centre, Córdoba.
- Thevaradyil K. THOMAS: is to become the publication editor in the Communication Department from August. Since 1977 he has been the Communications Secretary for the Christian Conference of Asia. From 1975-76 he was Associate Director for the WACC, London and prior to that editorial secretary for the Christian Literature Society, Madras.

Mr Ninan Koshy, at present Executive Secretary of the Churches' Commission on International Affairs, will become Director of this Commission as from 1 July. He is succeeding Leopoldo Niilus.

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 26 MARCH 1981



THREATENED SANCTUARY RIGHTS  
CAUSE STRONG REACTIONS

Paris (EPS) - Some 32 French organizations have decided to work together to defend the threatened rights of asylum in France. Among these associations are: the Roman Catholic Commission on Justice and Peace, the social, economic and international commission of the French Protestant Federation, and CIMADE, the ecumenical inter-church aid organization.

In a joint statement published on 6 March, they announced their firm intention to defend the rights of refugees in France as defined in the Geneva Convention. They pointed out in particular that access to French territory should be given to anyone who feels threatened and who requests political asylum. Each request should be given due consideration "without discrimination"; maintain the right of residence, the right to work and social benefits during the assessment period, said the statement.

In the light of the serious threats, restrictions, the serious material, social and psychological consequences with which the refugees are faced, the organizations decided to work together to warn the public and to fight against the deterioration of the rights of asylum and to try and find a solution for these tragic cases, the statement said.

EPS

PRAY FOR ASIA CALL  
FOR MAY

Singapore (EPS) - Asia Sunday - a day set aside each year to pray for the countries and peoples of Asia, Australia and New Zealand - will be celebrated this year on 31 May.

Asia Sunday is organized by the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA), a regional ecumenical fellowship of 86 member churches and 16 national councils of churches.

This year it will have particular significance as it will fall immediately after the CCA's Seventh Assembly to be held in Bangalore, India, 18-22 May, on the theme "Living in Christ for People". In a communication from the CCA the Assembly theme is said to "describe our calling as Christians". It goes on: "We are called to live in Christ; we are also called to live with people. The theme reminds us that these are not separate aspects of Christian living. We cannot choose one or the other. They go together and they are inseparable. The theme points to that togetherness and holds it up as the measure of the integrity of the faith we profess."

EPS

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ANNOUNCED  
FOR PUERTO RICAN SEMINARY

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico (EPS) - A five-year development programme to strengthen theological education at the Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico, has been announced.

Dr Luis Fidel Mercado, the President of the interdenominational, ecumenical and Hispanic institution said: "There is a double thrust to provide professional and lay religious leadership for Puerto Rico, Latin America and US Hispanic Churches. The Seminary will graduate about 250 theological students and provide continuing education workshops and lay development programmes for another 2,000 persons this decade".

Long range plans include establishment of audio-visual, communication, student and career assessment centres, an amphitheater for conference and drama, an apartment building for married and women students, and facilities for music training and additional classrooms and offices.

Dr Mercado said: "The Seminary has had 460 graduates from 15 denominations since its founding in 1919. More than 60 per cent of the pastors of denominations supporting the Seminary have attended this Hispanic institution of graduate theological education.

"A new epoch in ecumenical support for the Seminary began in February 1981 with a historically significant meeting of members of the Board of Trustees and its newly-authorized Steering Committee, which will help plan and implement the development programme the next five years."

This Steering Committee includes 15 USA leaders from the five denominations which support the Seminary. They represent the American Baptist Churches, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, and the United Presbyterian Church, whose mission boards help the Seminary financially.

EPS

NEW HEAD FOR SWEDISH  
FREE CHURCH COUNCIL

Stockholm (EPS) - The Rev. Karl-Axel Elmquist has been appointed Secretary General of the Swedish Free Church Council including the aid- and development organization Swedish Free Church Aid.

The council includes most of the non-Lutheran Churches in Sweden.

EPS



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN URGE CAUTION  
ON ARMS SALES

New York (EPS) - Sixty-eight United Presbyterian women who just returned from the Caribbean and Central and South America have urged the President of the United States, in a telegram, not to extend military aid to any government in this hemisphere without significant majority support of members of the Organization of American States.

The women were participants in a three-week "Las Americas Unidas" seminar and dialogue sponsored by the National Executive Committee of United Presbyterian Women, during which they were guests in women's homes in Guatemala, Colombia, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

They indicated to President Reagan that through their conversations with these women and with other people in the countries they visited, they came to understand that "unrest in the Western hemisphere is rooted in the absence of the basic necessities of life. Hunger and oppression", they continued, "result in discontent". They went on to say that "to use weapons in such a setting brings more oppression and more hunger" and that "military aid only speeds this cycle; it neither feeds nor frees people".

"We pray", they concluded in the telegram, "that in our day people in the Americas may have food, hope, and freedom, and that we may all live in peace".

EPS

STOCKHOLDER ACTIONS TO  
FIGHT APARTHEID

Indianapolis, Ind. (EPS) - Nineteen religious bodies, including a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) organization, are to support stockholder resolutions aimed at stopping sales of equipment and services to South Africa.

The Disciples' United Christian Missionary Society and the 19 other religious bodies will ask International Business Machines to ban the sale, lease or service of computers to or for the South African government, except for medical or humanitarian uses.

The stockholders' resolution will be voted at the 27 April meeting in Kansas City, Mo.

In a second action, the society will ask Mobil Oil to ban sales and services to the South African police or military when the stockholders meet 7 May in New York city.

In a statement, Wade D. Rubick, of the Disciples' UCMS said: "American business has supported for years - either knowingly or unknowingly - the terrible condition of apartheid by its practices and working conditions, all of which have been imposed on American corporations by the South African government".

"The church, through stockholder actions, is saying to corporations doing business there that they must stop supporting apartheid, the terrible denial of human rights, even if it means withdrawing from South Africa".

EPS

RUNCIE SETS OUT SOME HARD  
QUESTIONS FOR ROME

London (EPS) - Some of the "hard questions" involved in any consideration of unity between Canterbury and Rome as a practical possibility were raised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, in the first of a series of five Lent lectures in Westminster Abbey with the general theme "Towards Christian Unity".

Speaking on - "Rome and Canterbury- Unity, Diversity and Comprehensiveness", Dr Runcie took as his starting-point Cardinal Mercier's 1925 paper suggesting the idea of the Anglican Church being "united, not absorbed". This paper stated: "We can't tolerate an Anglican Church separated from Rome, and we can't tolerate an Anglican Church absorbed by Rome". But once this was admitted the question arose of what range of diversity was compatible with unity, or, to put it another way, what were the limits of acceptable diversity.

This is a particularly pressing question for any Church in dialogue with Rome, said Dr Runcie, "because of the Roman tendency towards an authoritarian centralization and uniformity". "Forgive me for making this point somewhat crudely", he said.

There were therefore some "hard questions" about Vatican centralization which Anglicans should now be asking Roman Catholics in order to elucidate what would be meant by unity not absorption, the Archbishop said.

Citing Pope Victor's threat, towards the close of the second century, to excommunicate the entire Asian Episcopate because they had a different date for Easter, Dr Runcie went on: "The tendency to uniformity still seems to be a Roman attitude of mind... The Uniate Churches in the USA are forbidden the married clergy they have had from time out of mind in the Middle East because this clashes with 'Latin' canon law. Or, how much freedom does the Roman Catholic Episcopal Conference of England and Wales have to pursue moral and pastoral initiatives culturally relevant to the mission of Christ in this country? To put it more directly, would Anglicans be expected to accept the 'Latin' attitudes and rulings of the various Vatican congregations?"

In what was clearly a reference to the dispute over birth control Dr Runcie also mentioned "moral issues relating to particular interpretations of natural law and the Anglo-Saxon tradition of the informed Christian conscience".

The ultimate theological question was: "What is involved - and what is not involved - in acceptance of the universal ministry of the Bishop of Rome? Is this ministry not solely concerned with the basic unity of the faith in the world-wide communion of the Churches and their God-given diversity? Would this mean, at the most, a form of universal presidency in charity when essential matters of faith are at stake? What relation, then, would the Vatican have to the various synods of the Anglican Communion?"

These were "some questions about the Anglican acceptance of a universal primacy which cannot be answered until Anglicans and Roman Catholics have come to some consensus on what acceptance actually involves". Dr Runcie

(more)



recognized that Rome would have some tough questions to put to Anglicans as well, but he expressed the hope that when the Pope visits Britain next year that they might be able to take a step together towards the mutual exchange which will show both traditions more clearly what visible structures unity in diversity requires.

EPS

AFRICAN CHURCHES PLAN  
FOURTH ASSEMBLY

Nairobi (EPS) - Nearly 500 people are expected to attend the forthcoming General Assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) to be held in Nairobi, 2-12 August. The theme of the conference will be "Following the Light of Jesus Christ". According to the AACC General Committee Chairman, the Rev. John Gatu, and the Rev. Maxime Rafransoa, the new AACC General Secretary, 53 of the 118 member churches have indicated that they will send delegates to the Assembly.

The Assembly is expected to be the most crucial in the 18-year life of the organization. Since 1978, the AACC has been plagued by a major financial and leadership crisis. The Assembly is expected to give a lead in settling the organization's internal affairs, and fix priorities for the 80's with the Churches established in Africa, "the continent of permanent crisis" as Mr Rafransoa called it in an interview with EPS.

The 270 delegates at the Assembly will discuss pressing political, social and economic issues. These include growing militarism and elitism, the breakdown in social morality, education and evangelism in Africa.

The General Secretary said that each of the preceding Assemblies had one strong point of reflection : independence (Kampala 1963); development (Abidjan 1969); liberation and moratorium (Lusaka 1974).

The underlying theme in Nairobi will be healing and reconciliation within the churches and the African countries, Mr Rafransoa added, "but the previous concerns will remain with us, because all African countries are not yet liberated, autonomy is not the rule, and development is still a problem".

The opening of the Assembly, will feature a "Harambee" with all participants. It is expected that this fund-raising effort will enable the AACC to finish building their new conference centre. In order to improve the AACC's overall financial position the General Commission has asked the 118 churches which represent more than 90 million Christians to set aside one Sunday per year to pray and take-up offerings for the organization. "It is important that member churches show solidarity before we can go out to our ecumenical partners for financial assistance," declared Mr Rafransoa.

EPS

MELBOURNE CONTINUES TO  
CHALLENGE EUROPEAN CHURCHES

Liebfrauenberg, France (EPS) - "It seems to me that something has been set in motion at the World Council of Churches' Melbourne Conference on Mission that cannot now be stopped" said the Rev. Jacques Maury, talking about a meeting arranged on his initiative at the beginning of March, at Liebfrauenberg, near Strasbourg.

Some 40 people from Western Europe met to evaluate the impact, the Melbourne conference, which took place in May 1980, has had on the participants from Western Europe and on the European churches in general.

About half of the European participants who had been at Melbourne were present in Liebfrauenberg and this was said by Jacques Maury, the President of the French Protestant Federation, to be "an evident sign of the impact of the conference on those who were present".

In an interview with EPS, Mr Maury affirmed that "the theological thrust of the theme of the Kingdom of the Crucified and of His siding with the poor has obliged us, after Melbourne, to enter into a serious reevaluation of the ministry of our European churches which are in the main in a society dominated by the power of money". At Liebfrauenberg the participants have perceived in a new way the possibilities for renewed ecumenical action.

The participants were conscious of the difficulties which confront both European Churches and Christians. "The extent of the reevaluation and analysis which is necessary and which is implied is such that it is difficult to surmount simply the bad conscience which secretly clothes Europeans today" said the French Protestant leader.

Among the common convictions which emerged from the three days of work, Mr Maury picked out two prominent points: "the urgent need to react before the growing menace of a nuclear war and, because of the need for a common Christian witness, the need now to grow towards intercommunion, an essential condition for the credibility of all common witness".

EPS

WELL-KNOWN CHURCH COMMUNICATOR  
DIES IN THE US

Maywood, NJ (EPS) - Erik W. Modean, a well-known figure in both US and world church journalism has died here at 69 years of age.

Mr Modean was in charge of or on the staff of the English language press operations at four World Council of Churches Assemblies (Evanston, Ill., 1954; New Delhi 1961; Uppsala 1968; Nairobi 1975) and at four Lutheran World Federation Assemblies (Hanover 1952; Minneapolis 1957; Helsinki 1963; Evian-les-Bains, France 1970).

He was for 31 years head of the News Bureau at the Lutheran Council in the USA and its predecessor, the National Lutheran Council.

EPS



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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 2 APRIL 1981

CHURCH LEADERS CHALLENGE OIL COMPANIES  
TO SUPPORT ZIMBABWE

Utrecht, The Netherlands (EPS) - The heads of six major oil companies in France, Britain, the USA and the Netherlands have been asked by church leaders from these four countries to contribute to the reconstruction of Zimbabwe, as reparation for supplying the former Rhodesian regime with oil.

In a letter addressed to Total, Royal Dutch Shell, British Petroleum, Mobil, Standard Oil, and Texaco, more than 50 church leaders say they have been encouraged by the birth of Zimbabwe but add "we are deeply concerned to support its efforts towards reconstruction".

The churchmen, representing national Christian Councils, Inter-church aid agencies and many denominations including Roman Catholic bodies, say: "We are writing to you because of our concern about the way oil products were exported to Rhodesia during the period of the illegal government of Ian Smith. For all or part of this period, the Smith regime and its military forces were dependent on oil supplied by your companies or their subsidiaries. It has been persuasively argued that the war was prolonged, and the destruction considerably increased, by the continued supply of your companies' products. There is, therefore, a clear moral case for a form of reparation payments, to be made by your companies for the devastation which has occurred.

Arguing that they believe it is vital that a wide variety of institutions support in practical ways the people of Zimbabwe, the churchmen point out that their agencies are already involved in reconstruction work in the country. They then challenge the oil companies with details of some of the tasks of reconstruction which are needed. For example: "The tasks of reconstruction include the resettlement of approximately one million people displaced by the war, the re-housing, feeding and re-equipping of a further million who have suffered the loss of their livelihoods, the rebuilding of the health and education services, the creation of jobs for those who fought in the war of independence, and the replacement of infrastructure destroyed in the war".

The churchmen conclude by urging the companies to approach immediately the Zimbabwe government, in order to discuss the best ways to contribute to the reconstruction. "We believe this should be a substantial amount", the churchmen say, noting "it can only be a token in the light of the suffering of the Zimbabwean people".

Among those signing the letters are, from France, M Roby Bois, of the inter-church agency CIMADE and Father Pierre Toulat, of Justice and Peace. From the Netherlands, the Rev. R.J. van der Veen, general secretary of the Dutch Missionary Council of the Protestant Churches in the Netherlands and Dr Albert van den Heuvel, chairman of the Commission on International Affairs of the Dutch Council of Churches.

The British signatories include the Anglican Bishops of Liverpool and Birmingham, Rt. Revs David Shepherd and Hugh Montefiore and two members of the World Council of Churches Central Committee, Mrs Jean Mayland and Ms Pauline Webb.

(more)



Signatories in the USA include the Rev. M. William Howard, President of the National Council of Churches of Christ and Richard E. Ulrich, chairman of the Marianist Office of Justice and Peace.

EPS

#### AFGHAN REFUGEES CONTINUE TO FLEE TO PAKISTAN

Copenhagen (EPS) - An average of more than 3,700 Afghan refugees a day fled into Pakistan during February. The total refugee population at the end of that month according to official figures stood at 1,635,928, a number which is expected to rise to two million by the middle of the year, especially when the expected Spring offensive within Afghanistan gets underway.

These figures were given to church-related aid organizations by representatives from the Pakistan Inter-Aid Committee at a recent meeting in Copenhagen.

The Inter-Aid Committee, is a refugee serving organization bringing together the Church of Pakistan, the Catholic Archdiocese of Karachi and Church World Service. It coordinates and carries out church-based relief efforts with the refugees. Its work is concentrated in Baluchistan where it is responsible for nearly all the relief efforts in that province while at the same time its activities are expanding in the North-West Frontier Province. Its main work is the delivery of relief goods, tents, quilts, clothing and shoes. A number of mobile medical teams are now also operational and a remedial nutrition programme is about to begin.

Many refugees now realize that they will be in Pakistan for a considerable time, the meeting was told, and so they are becoming more amenable to the idea of participating in programmes that have a development or self-help nature. Thus the IAC hopes to add some income-generating projects to its programme in the area.

There are, nevertheless many unmet needs among the refugees. The UNHCR has cited loss of income because of a handicapped, absent, missing or dead male head of family; unmet medical needs of every description including wounds and injuries resulting from military activities; milk for babies who cannot be adequately fed by their mothers; emergency assistance of all kinds to compensate for losses above and beyond the allowances made available through official channels; and care for the many widows and orphans.

In a pledging session at the end of the meeting more than US\$ 5 million for the IAC programmes was raised.

The World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) is among the organizations endorsing the ICA work and is channelling funds to its programme.

EPS

500th ANNIVERSARY PREPARATIONS  
OF MARTIN LUTHER'S BIRTH IN 1983

Berlin, GDR (EPS) - Religious celebrations to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther will begin on 4 May, 1983, at the Wartburg Castle, GDR, where the Protestant Reformer translated the New Testament into German, and on his birthday, 10 November, a service will be held in Eisleben - Luther's place of birth and death, the Lutheran committee of the Evangelical Churches in German Democratic Republic (GDR) have announced.

In addition to these events, the committee, after their preparatory meeting, said that several regional meetings are also to be held between May and November 1983. An exhibition will be shown in Erfurt on "Martin Luther's Life, Works and Influence". The committee is also preparing religious programmes for both radio and television on the life and work of the reformer.

According to a press release from the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR the central theme of the celebrations will be to explain Luther's interpretation of the first commandment: "To love, fear and trust God above all". According to the committee, this theme will explain Luther's conception of God, mankind and the church. The organizing committee hopes that the 1983 celebrations will also stimulate the public's interest in Luther's works.

EPS

US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY -  
CHURCH CONCERN

New York (EPS) - In December 1980 a strongly worded human rights appeal was issued by a representative group of American religious leaders to then President elect Reagan. The only reply accorded them was a brief standardized note by Richard Allen, then Assistant to Reagan for National Security Affairs, thanking the church leaders for keeping the President informed of their concerns.

Since then 200 additional religious leaders have added their signatures to the appeal. In a new letter, the group is calling for a meeting with the President to discuss their concerns, making it clear that the initial reply was not acceptable. They now include twenty-six Roman Catholic, United Methodist and Episcopal bishops, as well as the presidents or chief executive officers of nearly every major religious body in the United States.

In the letter the church leaders state that at this particular time they are especially concerned about El Salvador, but equally so about other nations where the United States has extensive economic, political and military involvements. They state their belief that many more violations have occurred since the open letter in December which might have been averted had the President spoken out as the signatories requested.

EPS



WCC STATEMENT MOURNS SLAIN CHILDREN  
POINTS TO GROWING VIOLENCE IN THE US

Atlanta (EPS) - Leaders of the World Council of Churches (WCC) concluding a weeklong series of meetings here, today issued a statement expressing shared loss and grief over the murders of black children in Atlanta and have called upon the Churches to monitor what they see as "the growing violence among persons and groups" throughout the United States.

Atlanta Mayor Jackson and Public Safety Commissioner Lee P. Brown received the statement in a half-hour session with the World Council delegation. WCC officials have been participating in a consultation with American member churches to review the Council's Programmes of Justice and Service throughout the World.

"We share in the loss of the children who have been killed, in the sorrow, bewilderment, grief and anger of their bereaved families, and in the understandable but destructive onslaught of fear, tension and mistrust which these events have unleashed on the Atlanta community", the statement says.

Twenty black children have been killed in as many months and two more are reported missing. Nearly US\$ 2.5 million in Federal funds have been approved to aid the investigation of the unsolved slayings.

The WCC statement recognizes "the efforts being made by the Atlanta community to find the perpetrators and to stop this degradation of human life, rights, dignity, safety and community", and acknowledges "the nationwide evidence of the continuing and growing statistics of violence against blacks and others".

"But we must also speak about the change of mood in the nation which has signalled to many that the rights of humans have become of lesser importance, about the growth of groups which preach hate and violence against others of a different race, ethnicity or belief, about the encouragement of many, including some of our leaders, of the false belief that a future of hope is possible while ignoring or rejecting the needs and aspirations of many in our society, and about the sin of claiming opportunity and advantage for ourselves at the expense of others.

"We call upon the churches and their agencies to monitor and publicize the growing violence against persons and groups throughout this nation. We pray fervently that the anguish of Atlanta and fearful, poor and suffering people in many, many other places in the world will be recognized as the cries of pain of our brothers and sisters in the human family and that those cries will awaken us again to the hope for justice and love which our faith requires of us", the statement concludes.

Anglican Bishop Neville de Souza of Jamaica led the delegation which presented the resolution to Atlanta City officials. Others representing the WCC included Dr Konrad Raiser, Acting General Secretary; Ambassador Olle Dahlen of Sweden, Moderator of the WCC's Commission on International Affairs; Bishop John Samuel of the (Anglican) Church of Pakistan and Moderator of the Commission on Inter-church Aid, Refugee and World Service; Dr Sylvia Talbot of Atlanta, Moderator of the Christian Medical Commission;

(more)

Ms Annette Hutchins-Felder of New York, an executive of the United Methodist Church and Moderator of the Programme to Combat Racism; Mr Aaron Tolen of Cameroon, Moderator of the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development, and a number of WCC staff executives.

EPS

(A report on the WCC Atlanta meeting referred to above will appear in the next issue of EPS, 2 April 1981)

CHURCHES' ROLE IN EMERGENCIES  
SUBJECT OF SPECIALIST MEETING

Bossey, nr. Geneva (EPS) - The special role of the Churches in emergency and disaster situations, the need for emergency preparedness, and ways in which knowledge already available in the churches on such activities could be exchanged were three of the subjects under discussions at a meeting here last week (18-20 March).

Present at the meeting arranged by the World Council of Churches' Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) were participants responsible for the churches' response and action in times of emergency from Africa, India, the Caribbean and the Middle East together with executives from inter-church aid agencies in Europe and North America.

In the discussion on the special role of the Churches, the meeting emphasized the church as servant - enabler, advocate and caretaker. It noted at the same time that in many cases the Church is both victim and provider. Service too, pointed out the meeting, includes solidarity with those affected, counselling and building-up morale.

The need for emergency preparedness was agreed but the difficulties and implications, both from the financing and the field operations sides, need considerable work and study before any plans can be drawn-up.

Ways of sharing the accumulated and evaluated knowledge of emergency operations between all partners on all continents was also discussed. It was significant that this was the first meeting of its kind bringing together experts from the field of churches' involvement in emergencies. This exchange of accumulated knowledge will benefit all partners in future emergencies.

EPS

OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO  
RELIGIOUS JOURNALISM

New York (EPS) - Lilian R. Block, 72, editor-in-chief of Religious News Service for 22 years, died on Saturday, 21 March in Montclair, NJ.

Ms Block had headed the RNS news service in New York until her retirement just over a year ago. RNS is the principal source of religious news in the USA for most of the main religious publications and many daily newspapers.

Commenting on her death the Rev. John Bluck, Communications' Director of the World Council of Churches (WCC) said: "The ecumenical movement has lost one of its most distinguished interpreters. We honour her life and mourn her passing. But her best memorial will be the standards and the integrity of her journalism."

EPS



CHRISTIAN DELEGATION FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
VISITS HONG KONG

Hong Kong (EPS) - Eight Chinese Protestant Christian leaders have arrived here for a two-week visit, 22 March-4 April. This is their first visit since 1949.

The delegation was led by Bishop K.H. Ting, President of the China Christian Council (CCC). He said at a press conference that the religious freedom policy has resumed in China and more than 100 Christian Protestant Churches have re-opened for public worship since 1979. He also said that over 130,000 Bibles have been printed and distributed in the country.

The Chinese Christian delegates are scheduled to attend a four-day consultation on China organized by the Christian Conference of Asia in which church leaders from over 14 Asian countries will participate.

The team will also meet local church leaders and will take part in a thanksgiving service held by the Hong Kong Christian Council.

They will speak on the "Future Development of Theological Education in China" at a meeting held by the local member schools of the Association of Theological Schools in Southeast Asia, 30 March. Participants will be the alumni and students of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Concordia Theological Seminary, and the theology section of Chung Chi College, Chinese University.

In addition, they are invited to speak at a seminar on "Tasks and Hopes for the Days Ahead - The Protestant Church in China" organized by the Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Centre, Shatin, 31 March.

A Lutheran World Federation Vice-president, Dr Andrew Hsiao, said he hopes that under mutual respect the Hong Kong Churches will be able to seek ways of cooperation with the Chinese Christians. In regard to their meeting with local religious leaders, Hsiao said it is a good opportunity for both churches to promote mutual understanding.

EPS

PSALM DISTRIBUTION  
IN HUNGARY

Budapest (EPS) - Distribution of 3131 copies of the book of Psalms will take place in Hungarian parishes this year paid for from the Olivier Beguin fund.

The book will be a new translation of the Psalms and will be illustrated by Viola Berki, a Hungarian artist already well-known for her illustrations of scripture.

The books are distributed by the Hungarian Bible Council, mainly in widely scattered parishes where the need for Scriptures is greatest.

The fund is named after Olivier Beguin, a long-time head of the United Bible Societies.

EPS



APRIL 1981

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# AID TO GREECE



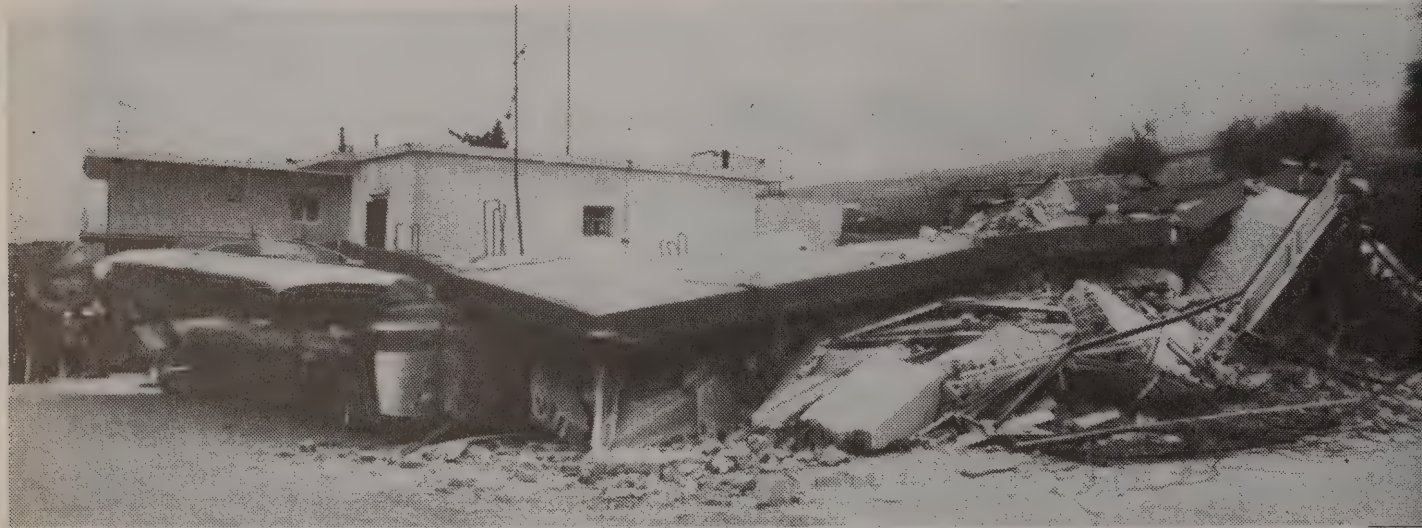
(2600)

At least 100,000 people are at this moment without shelter in Greece. They are the victims of a series of earthquakes which, between 24 February and mid-March 1981, severely affected a zone between Athens and the Gulf of Corinth. Some 8,500 houses are uninhabitable and about 10,000 are damaged.

The Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) launched an appeal on 11 March for US\$ 350,000 to aid those affected.

The ruins illustrate the degree of intensity of earthquakes:

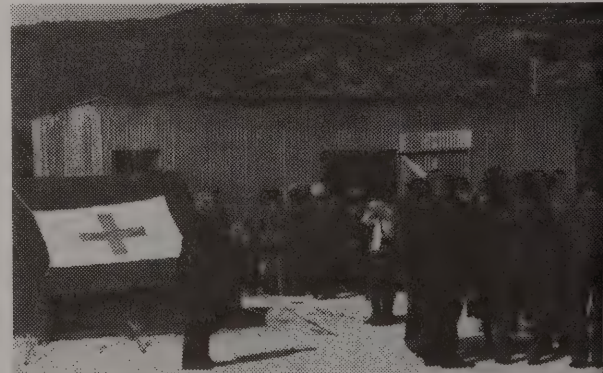
- (2600) The remains of a three-storey house in Kifissia
- (2601) The bus station at Plataies
- (2602) The Conti Hotel at Loutraki
- (2603) The ruined church of St. Nicolas at Plataies



(2601)



(2603)



(2602)



(2604)



authorities and the Orthodox Church of  
e responded rapidly in giving help to those  
y the earthquakes which continue to occur  
regular intervals.

) A dispensary and distribution centre set  
the Red Cross at Perahora.

) Aid to the most urgent of the many  
les who have lost all.

) Amidst the ruins and desolation, Orthodox  
ts bring consolation and ...

) participation. Here, for example, the  
tor of "Apostoliki Diakonia", Bishop  
asios, with the help of theological students  
up a tent a Plataies.

) Procession and prayers with the victims  
new their hope.

) Churches have been destroyed, but the  
ful are found in prayer in open countryside  
e icons salvaged from the ruins.

os: Manginas & Tsetsis/WCC)



(2605)



(2606)



(2607)



(2608)



(2609)



# ZIMBABWE ON THE MOV

The population of Zimbabwe is over seven million. They inhabit a region of some 96.4 million acres. Among the problems which face the young independent state, agriculture figures large. In and around the old "Tribal Trust Lands" live, on 45 million acres, some 700,000 black farming families, who await help, subventions and rapid measures from government. Facing similar problems are the white farmers whose farms cover a similar area and who some 35 per cent of the black population.

(2610) More than 70 per cent of the population live in the rural areas.

(2611) Following the negotiated peace, land is being reclaimed.

(2612) Drought has hit hard in 1980; it is hoped that this year will bring better results.

(2613) Nature is given some artificial help.

(2614) Small dam construction to help irrigation

(Front page) Agricultural work in Zimbabwe

Photos: HEKS-EPER/Zurich.



(2614)



(2612)



(2610)



(2613)



(2611)





# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 9 APRIL 1981

\* PLEASE NOTE EMBARGO

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POPE JOHN PAUL II TO VISIT  
WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Geneva (EPS) - Agreement has now been reached on a visit to the World Council of Churches by His Holiness Pope John Paul II. In response to an official invitation issued this week, the visit to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, will take place on Friday, 5 June, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

This invitation comes at the end of a series of careful preliminary discussions aimed at making the visit a substantial ecumenical event.

A highlight of the occasion will be a personal and private meeting between His Holiness and WCC leaders, representatives of WCC member churches, and other church organizations in the Ecumenical Centre.

The Pope's visit is expected to begin with an act of prayer and worship in the chapel of the Ecumenical Centre, to be followed by an official welcome and an exchange of messages.

It is also planned that Dr Philip Potter, WCC General Secretary, and Pope John Paul will exchange brief statements in a public session in the presence of other church leaders.

The theme of "common witness" is expected to provide the focus for the visit. Common witness includes all that the churches can do together ranging from mission and evangelism to social action programmes, despite the differences which still exist in faith and church order.

This subject has already been given considerable attention by the Joint Working Group - the permanent liaison group between the WCC and the Vatican - and by Pope John Paul himself. The Joint Working Group will hold its annual meeting in Geneva, 9-13 June, following the Pope's visit.

Consideration is being given to a joint statement to be issued on the occasion of the visit.

The only previous Papal visit to the Ecumenical Centre was that paid by Pope Paul VI in June 1969.

EPS

POTTER TO PARTICIPATE IN ISTANBUL  
CELEBRATIONS AT PENTECOST

Geneva (EPS) - At Pentecost, the World Council of Churches' (WCC) General Secretary will take part in the festivities of the 1600th anniversary of the Second Ecumenical Council, organized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. Dr Philip Potter will thus be responding to an invitation extended to the WCC in January 1981, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of His Holiness Dimitrios I. This was announced here on 2 April, by a spokesman of the WCC.

The festivities are to take place in Istanbul, 5-7 June, and representatives of all Orthodox Churches are expected to attend, it was announced by the Phanar, the Patriarchate's headquarters. Among other personalities attending the celebrations will be the Rev. André Appel, President of the European Conference of Churches.

The year 1981 was declared as "the Year of the Second Ecumenical Council" by the Christmas Patriarchal Encyclical of Dimitrios I. The Ecumenical Patriarchate is going to organize a series of events including theological symposia and seminars in Thessalonika and the Orthodox Centre of Chambésy, Geneva. Two commemorative volumes, including theological essays of both Orthodox and non-Orthodox theologians on the significance of this Council will be published during the course of this year.

The Rev. Dr Philip Potter will be leaving for Istanbul, the day after the visit of Pope John Paul II to the WCC.

EPS

NEW BISHOP FOR  
LONDON

London (EPS) - The next Bishop of London is to be Dr Graham Leonard, who has been Bishop of Truro since 1973 and before that was for nine years Bishop of Willesden. Bishop Leonard, who will be 60 in May, will succeed Dr Gerald Ellison, who announced his retirement last July. The Diocese of London ranks third in the Church of England after the Archdioceses of Canterbury and York.

Bishop Leonard is considered the leading member of the Catholic wing of the Church of England. He was a leading opponent of the scheme for Anglican-Methodist unity in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and more recently he has come out against proposals for the Church of England to enter into a covenant with four of the free churches. Since 1976 he has been chairman of the Church of England's Board for Social Responsibility.

EPS



CRISIS LOOMING IN SOUTH  
AFRICA SAYS TUTU

Swanwick, Derby, UK (EPS) - The argument that investment in South Africa helped the blacks came in for a scathing rebuttal from Bishop Desmond Tutu, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, when he addressed the Spring Assembly of the British Council of Churches held at Swanwick, Derbyshire, from 30 March to 2 April.

Citing the case of a little girl he met in a resettlement camp living with her widowed mother and sister who borrowed food and when they could borrow no food drank water to fill their stomachs, he said people were starving in South Africa by deliberate government policy. Yet when he complained to the Prime Minister about this case he was told the policy of forced population removals was legal. Some people in South Africa, he commented, could no longer distinguish between what was legal and what was morally right.

"So those who invest in South Africa should please do so with their eyes open", he went on. "They shouldn't delude themselves that they are doing anything for blacks. At least they ought to get rid of the humbug and know they are buttressing one of the most vicious systems since Naziism."

Speaking of the growing hostility and indeed hatred and anger to be found among young blacks, Bishop Tutu said a crisis was approaching in South Africa. That was why he was appealing to the international community to act now while there was still time. They should apply pressure, especially economic pressure, to bring the South African government to the negotiating table before it was too late.

He forecast that the elections being held in April would be the last all-white elections to be held in South Africa. "We will be free", he said. "The only question is how and when."

As at his press conference on Monday, 30 March, he explained that he had to be careful when discussing the economic pressure the West could bring to bear on South Africa. "If I got up in my country and said I support economic sanctions or an oil embargo, that would be economic sabotage, and if I were found guilty there would be a minimum sentence of five years".

What could British Christians do? They could pray; they could help people to know what the situation really was; they could work to form a proper public opinion of the kind that would make it easier for their government to act; and they could care about the same kind of things in Britain as in South Africa.

It was, he felt, easier for them to be Christians in South Africa where the challenges were so sharp and so real. It was far more difficult for British Christians in a milieu not blatantly but insidiously hostile to the Christian gospel.

"A church which does not suffer misses out on something essential to the nature of the church", he said. Discipleship included the cross, and it had been pointed out that the cross was something you found not in a confectioner's but in a carpenter's shop where you got splinters under your nails.

(more)

Moreover, he believed the Church of God, like God himself, could never be a neutral church. "It has to be biased in favour of the poor, of the oppressed, of those who are marginalized", he said.

The British Council of Churches endorsed the unanimous opposition the Churches have shown to the British nationality bill now before Parliament. The BCC opposed it because it was "morally questionable and racially divisive", and expressed the hope that the British government would withdraw it and draw up new legislation taking account of the nine principles laid down by the Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales in July 1979 to provide the moral basis of any future nationality law.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Robert Runcie, said the root of his objection to the bill was the insecurity it would cause. "Belonging is a basic human need", he said. "That as Christians we must insist on both in general and in detail".

The BCC Assembly also roundly condemned "the use of torture by any government, group or individual, in any place, at any time, for any reason". It urged the British and Irish governments not only to work for the international adoption of the UN convention against torture but also to devise means of exercising stricter control over the export of what is termed "repressive technology" to governments known to violate human rights.

Introducing this resolution, the Baptist leader Dr David Russell pointed out that "to degrade my brother is to dishonour God". Torture was "a degradation and dishonouring of God himself and a denial of the incarnation". It involved the torturer in the denial of his or her own humanity. Not only was it dreadful in itself, but it destroyed the social fabric of the community in which it was used.

In a major address to the Assembly, Dr Paul Abrecht, director of the World Council of Churches' Church and Society sub-unit, and the person responsible for the 1979 Faith, Science and the Future Conference, said that "the momentum of technological change seems beyond the control of any society". We live in a tension, said Dr Abrecht, "between being thankful for their benefits and fearful of the unforeseen and unforeseeable evil they may produce".

Neither capitalist nor socialist systems have managed to cope with this rapidly developing science and technology, Dr Abrecht believes. Turning to the ethical issues involved for Christians, Dr Abrecht pointed out the differences Christians and Churches have in dealing with some of these and the present lack of clarity about the Biblical basis of Christian social ethics.

Dr Abrecht concluded his address by declaring that in the ecumenical movement "evangelism and social action should never be separated". He declared "the only purpose of the social witness is to manifest the historical reality and spiritual power of the truth which is in Christ".



CARDIFF MEETING SETS EUROPEAN CHURCHES  
STUDY AGENDA TO '85

Cardiff, UK (EPS) - In the years to come the European Churches should promote the responsible use of nature, the containment of violence in a world threatened by nuclear death, and education for non-violence. A study should also be made as to whether and how churches of different traditions can share in sacramental fellowship before they achieve full unity.

These were some the recommendations made by the 90 representatives from 18 European countries who attended an international consultation held in Cardiff, Wales, 24-28 March 1981, organized by the Conference of European Churches (CEC), on the subject "The Communion of the Holy Spirit Today - Trinity, Church, Creation".

The meeting concluded that no real progress would be made towards full unity unless the Churches live a spirituality of communion anchored in the Trinity. Professor Dumitru Popescu, new studies secretary of the CEC said that such a spirituality "would favour mutual enrichment between different Christian traditions and, on the other hand, a more profound solidarity between the Churches and the world". The Rumanian theologian pointed out that once Christians have discovered the profound fellowship between the Holy Spirit, Church and creation then they feel fully responsible towards creation, peace education, disarmament and security.

The presidium of the CEC will deal with these recommendations and take action on details for further studies before the next CEC Assembly in 1985, when they meet in Marseille in May, 1981. The CEC brings together 112 Anglican, Orthodox, and Protestant Churches in 26 countries from the Atlantic to the Urals.

The conference questioned whether in a wider frame it was possible (as already happens in the Leuenberg Agreement of the Protestant Churches in Europe) to have sacramental communion as sister churches and to recognize each other's ministry and membership before the full unity of churches participating in such agreements has been reached. The emphasis here lay on reconciled fellowship of churches still separated in their doctrine.

Concerning the security and disarmament in Europe, which is a great concern of CEC, the delegates pointed out that so far the poor blocs had not really talked about true disarmament but at best only about "cooperative arms control". It was emphasized that the churches should not support systems that endanger the environment.

It was further recommended that the consumer practices of modern man and his real material needs be examined, including the objectives and structures of a "growth economy" out of ecological responsibility, and out of a responsibility for the impoverished people in the Southern hemisphere and for future generations.

The Cardiff consultation observed with concern the growing tendency towards a worldwide East-West confrontation leading to greater militarization and a return to "power politics" in Europe. The Churches were described as a "free zone" for peace work and alternative concepts. It was recommended that the CEC stick to the experiences of its peace work so far and continue to support the realization of the principles of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

NEW GROUP FORMED TO COMBAT  
RACISM IN EUROPE

Brussels (EPS) - A new organization has been set up here to combat racism in Europe. This move follows a recommendation from the Stockholm Consultation of March 1980, which was held as part of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) process of consultation on the churches response to racism in the 80's.

The Churches Committee on Migrant Workers in Europe (CCMWE) and the Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society in the European Community (ECCSEC) have created the new organization, which will relate to minority groups and their organizations in Europe and, if possible, secure added resources for them.

It is anticipated that there will be 15 members of the Working Group, from various parts of Europe. Close links will be established with the Churches and with migrant workers organizations and the minorities.

The Rev. Elliott Kendall, Director of the Community and Race Relations Unit of the British Council of Churches, has been appointed chairman of the group. The Joint Secretaries will be Marc Lenders, director of ECCSEC and Pieter Muller, Executive Secretary of CCMWE.

EPS

200th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACT  
OF TOLERATION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Prague (EPS) - Celebrations organized by the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren began on 22 March in Prague, to mark the 200th Anniversary of the Act of Toleration.

This Act, passed in 1781, allowed Czech Protestants who had been living illegally, to organize reformed and Lutheran congregations.

During the 22 March celebrations addresses were given by Milan Hajek, President of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren and James I. McCord, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

The World Council of Churches was represented by Professor Todor Sabev, Deputy General Secretary who, in greeting the church recalled with gratitude "your tremendous contribution to the Prague Christian movement for peace and justice as well as your great part in common endeavours in regional and international ecumenical organizations".

Professor Sabev, who was accompanied by the Europe Secretary of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) of the WCC, Uffe Gjerding, was received, during his stay in Czechoslovakia, by various leaders of the host church, by the President of the Czech Ecumenical Council, Bishop V. Kiedron, as well as the director of the Secretariat for Religious Affairs of the Presidium of the Government, Dr K. Hruza.

EPS



US CHURCHES EVALUATE JUSTICE  
AND SERVICE ISSUES AT WCC SEMINAR

Atlanta (EPS) - Peacemaking, economic justice and the elimination of racism are principal concerns of the US Churches and should be high on the agenda at the World Council of Churches' (WCC) next Assembly in 1983.

This was the consensus among representatives from the WCC American member churches who gathered here 16-18 March, to share their social justice activities and concerns with each other and with the World Council. The consultation was called by the WCC in order to learn of US priorities and to provide opportunity for the WCC to make the policies and objectives of its social action programmes more fully understood within its American membership.

Held at the Interdenominational Theological Centre here, the seminar was also part of the preparatory process for the WCC's sixth assembly, set for Vancouver, Canada in 1983.

More than 80 participants attended interest groups organized around the WCC sub-units responsible for justice and service programmes. Included in this are: the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS); the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development (CCPD); the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA); the Christian Medical Commission (CMC); and the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR).

In his opening address, Dr Konrad Raiser, the WCC's Acting General Secretary drew attention to the historical tension between the concepts of justice and service because "service can bypass the causes of suffering and need". The problem is how these two poles of justice and service can be held together.

In a reaction to Dr Raiser's address, the Rev. M. William Howard, President of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, said that if the poor are to be free it will be as a result of their own struggles. The Churches, he said, have not yet stated their position and made their choice in that struggle. There are many groups in the US at this time, said Mr Howard, who hold out simplistic solutions but there is not a grouping of people who have a vision of a just, participatory and sustainable society.

"We need to reclaim the moral fabric of our society", said Howard, "we have lost the credible voice to offer an attractive, biblically-rooted alternative and have not filled a vacuum". The NCCC President ended with a call for a religious revival "rooted in the richness of third world churches".

In a major address, the Rev. Dr. Joe Roberts, senior pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta (the church of Martin Luther King) tried to describe the situation in Atlanta today, hit as it is with the unsolved murders of many black children.

"The kind of coalition emerging today in the United States", he said, "is against the sacredness of human beings, especially black people". "The assault in Atlanta is on the most vulnerable part of our community - poor black children" he said.

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The present emotional response is broken when the question is raised of the root causes of the problem - poverty. Dr Roberts spoke at length on the violence in American society - "the pornography of violence" he called it. He recalled that "there is nothing more dangerous than men and women who have nothing to lose".

Another speaker, Dr Richard N. Dickinson, Professor of Social Ethics at Christian Theological Seminary, Indianapolis, described a number of trends in US society and outlined what he saw as the tasks for the church.

Among those trends he highlighted militarism, the siege mentality in the US at this time and the fact that current values - especially about reliance on technology - are being called into question.

Of the tasks, Dr Dickinson, called for more engagement, enabling people to become involved in society; for recognition of different styles of action to include both supporting projects and political involvement; for adoption of a wider educational role for churches and pastors, and for a religious revival which comes out of the engagement of people in the struggle and not from an individualistic, moralistic and pietistic basis.

Dr Robert J. Marshall, professor of Old Testament at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C., presented a biblical reflection on justice and service issues in the light of the 1983 WCC Assembly theme, "Jesus Christ, the Life of the World". Basing his Comments on St. John's gospel, Dr Marshall acknowledged that the gospel was generally identified as the most "spiritual" of the four but, he said, this was accurate only insofar as one understood its fundamental incarnational character. "The Word was made Flesh" contained in the prologue, is the theological presupposition of that which follows and lays the basis for affirmation of life in the world and acceptance of the need to be responsive to human needs and concerns.

Summing-up the work of the sub-groups, Dr Sylvia Talbot, Moderator of the WCC's Christian Medical Commission, said the groups felt that if the future was "grim and uncertain" then "there was no vision". "When did the gospel lose its power of hope?" she asked. "Where do we get our answers and what does the perception of Christ as the giver of life mean in this situation?" Dr Talbot commented.

She outlined a number of subjects which should be on the agenda for the Vancouver Assembly. These she detailed as peacemaking, wholeness, fulfilment and justice, including the need to overcome violence and genocide; racism and militarism; economic justice; congregational renewal, and health and education.

EPS



"I WILL NOT BE MUZZLED" TUTU  
TELLS PRESS

London (EPS) - Undeterred by the South African Prime Minister's threat that his passport would be withdrawn again on his return to South Africa, Bishop Desmond Tutu, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), gave a press conference in London, on Monday, 30 March, before going to the foreign office to meet British Minister Sir Ian Gilmour and repeated his call for peaceful change in South Africa before it was too late.

The Bishop recalled that he had only got his passport back in January after having had it withdrawn in March 1980. His passport was described as valid for five years. "It must be the shortest five years in history", he commented.

The reason for its withdrawal was no doubt because he had referred to a looming crisis in South Africa and had appealed to the international community to come to the negotiating table while a peaceful solution was still viable, he said.

But he was not able to say that he supported economic sanctions against South Africa. If he did that he would, on his return to South Africa, lay himself open to being found guilty of economic sabotage, a crime which carried the penalty of five years' imprisonment.

He felt it was strange that someone committed to peaceful and non-violent change would be penalized. If the avenues of peaceful change were closed the world would see that no effective non-violent means was open to the blacks of South Africa.

He disagreed with those fellow-blacks who thought the time had come for the last resort of armed struggle. "I think there are one or two other things we could try", he remarked, but refused to expand on this.

But the question to the West was: "How come you laud to the skies resistance movements during the last war, how come you virtually make Bonhoeffer a modern saint when he was involved in a plot to kill Hitler, but when it comes to black liberation you wake up suddenly and discover the Western church is pacifist?"

Asked if he thought he might be banned, he said: "Any black South African who does not consider this would need his head examined, but I would not allow myself to be muzzled".

EPS

BAPTISTS ELECT FIRST WOMAN  
PRESIDENT IN PUERTO RICO

San Juan, Puerto Rico (EPS) - For the first time in the history of the Baptist Church in Puerto Rico a woman has been elected to head the denomination.

At the conclusion of the March assembly, the Rev. Yamina Apolinaris, the minister of the First Baptist Church, Bayamón, took over as President and will lead the church during the next 12 months.

The Assembly in another action expressed its indignation and repudiation of the actions and attitudes of both the Soviet Union, Cuba and the United States and "any other country which is preventing another's rights and self-determination", and expressed solidarity with the people of El Salvador in their conflict, promising to pray that the fighting may soon end.

The assembly also agreed to a programme of education to alert the Puerto Rican people to the negative effects of the sensationalist press and to violence on television.

EPS

CATHOLIC DIOCESE AIDS  
SPANISH EVANGELICAL CHURCH

Malaga, Spain (EPS) - For the first time in the history of Spanish ecumenism the Roman Catholic Church has made a financial contribution to a project of the Spanish Evangelical Church.

In reply to a request from the Spanish Evangelical Church for help in the building of a church, community and conference centre in Los Rubios, near Malaga, the Catholic Bishop of Malaga, Ramón Buxarrais, on behalf of the Diocese, has sent Pts 200,000 (Sfr. 4,700.-). In his letter the Bishop regrets that the amount could not be larger. He points out that the Diocese has many churches, particularly in rural areas, in a poor state of repair. The amount is, however, the same as that sent to Catholic parishes when they have to repair and restore their buildings.

The Los Rubios Centre will be important for the work of the Protestant Churches in Spain on a local, national and international level.

The centre will have 20 double bedrooms, a conference hall and catering facilities and will serve both as a holiday centre for economically under-privileged families and for national and international seminars.

It is being financed by the church and by international church action through the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) and the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ECLOF) of the World Council of Churches.

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# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 30 APRIL 1981

UN SEMINAR COMMENDS CAMPAIGN  
AGAINST LOANS TO SOUTH AFRICA

Zurich (EPS) - An international seminar has commended trade unions, churches and students for their campaigns against banks involved in loans to South Africa.

The Seminar was held here 6-7 April, and was organized by the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, in cooperation with the World Council of Churches (WCC), and national and international non-governmental anti-Apartheid movements.

The seminar analyzed the role that foreign loans play in supporting the apartheid system. A representative of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid declared: "... every dollar or pound or franc invested in South Africa is a bullet aimed against the black people and children in South Africa".

As an example of the success of the anti-loan campaigns the seminar said that: "In the Netherlands, ABN and Amsterdam-Rotterdam Bank agreed to stop loans to South Africa. In Belgium Banque Bruxelles Lambert committed itself to refrain from granting further loans to the South African Government or its agencies. In Canada, the Toronto Dominion Bank has made a similar pledge.

"In the United States of America, numerous banks have adopted policies prohibiting or restricting lending to South Africa because of apartheid. Among them are Security Pacific, Chemical Bank, Chase Manhattan, Irving Trust, Bankers Trust, American Express International Bank, Mellon Bank, and Pittsburgh National Bank.

"In the United Kingdom, the Midland Bank undertook to make no further loans to the South African government or its agencies."

Giving examples of where organizations have exerted pressure on banks to change their policies, the seminar said that:

"In the USA and the UK particularly there have been numerous withdrawals of accounts and divestment of securities by trade unions, churches, universities, public bodies and city and state pension funds. For example in the US Harvard University recently divested \$ 51 million of Citibank securities. In addition, the National Council of Churches, the United Methodist Church, and the US Conference of the World Council of Churches have withdrawn accounts worth \$ 65 million from Citibank.

"In the UK several sizeable accounts have been withdrawn from Barclays Bank including the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Camden, Wrekin Council and the National Union of Public Employees. International bodies such as the Caribbean Conference of Churches, the World Confederation of Labour and the All African Conference of Churches have also closed their Barclays accounts."

In spite of these successes some 32 banks in Belgium, Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the USA, were named as major lenders to, or substantially involved with South Africa in defiance of appeals by the UN, the people of South Africa, and Namibia,

(more)



and numerous non-governmental organizations.

The Seminar urged African, non-aligned, oil-producing and other states committed to the liberation of Southern Africa, as well as Parliaments and public organizations in the countries concerned to persuade these banks and financial institutions to desist from all further involvement in apartheid in South Africa.

Recognizing that the UN itself was not "clean" the Seminar urged all UN bodies and specialized agencies to terminate financial relations with, or facilities to, any banks which persist in supporting the apartheid regime. The Seminar felt that such actions would set an example to governments, organizations and institutions.

In a special appeal to Switzerland and the Federal Republic of Germany, the seminar pointed out that while many other international banks are currently refusing to lend to the apartheid regime, banks in these two countries "continue to play a major leadership role in co-ordinating a wide variety of South African financial transactions. The governments concerned have taken no action even to discourage such transactions", said the seminar.

Participants in the Zurich seminar included the International Labour Office (ILO), the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, and a number of government observers, national liberation movements and non-governmental organizations. The latter group included church-related organizations such as the All Africa Conference of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Swiss Federation of Protestant Churches and from the USA the United Methodist Church, Women's Division and the Interfaith Centre on Corporate Responsibility.

EPS

#### LATIN AMERICANS ADDRESS US INVOLVEMENT

Campinas, Brazil (EPS) - Protests against the Reagan administration's interference in El Salvador continue flowing into the White House. The latest strongly worded letter is from the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI) in formation. Signed by the president and first vice-president of the council, the letter urges President Reagan to leave the people of El Salvador to determine their own future, and that "the deplorable political actions of the United States in Central America and the Caribbean in the past, are now without legal warrant or moral authority".

The decision to address Mr Reagan was taken at a recent meeting in Santiago, Chile, of CLAI representatives. CLAI represents a broad spectrum of the Protestant community in Latin America.

EPS

CONSULTATION WITH  
CHINESE CHURCH LEADERS

Hong Kong (EPS) - The Christian Conference of Asia sponsored a historic consultation in Hong Kong from 23 to 26 March. Its general theme was Christian Witness, reports the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) News service.

How does such a consultation become historic? By the composition of its participants. After a period of about 32 years, a group of eight Chinese Christian leaders representing the Protestant Christian community in the People's Republic of China had travelled out of China to discuss issues of Christian faith and life with leaders of churches and national councils from Australia, Bangladesh, Burma, India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The World Council of Churches (WCC) was represented by Mr Ninan Koshy and the Asia YMCA's by Mr Lee Soo Min.

The Chinese Christians presented three papers at the consultation - on Christianity in China, Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow; Witness-bearing in New China; and Christian Witness-bearing in Chinese Political Life.

Dr Lee Lai To of the Department of Political Science of the National University of Singapore gave a general survey of "Big Power Relations in Asia". Dr Ng Lee Min from Chung Chi College, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, presented a paper on "The Historical and Theological Perceptions of the Chinese Church".

The Consultation looked into the political realities of the Asia region and recognised the influence of the big powers - the United States and USSR; the economic power of Japan; and the emerging power of China. It is in the context of these big power relationships that delegates tried to understand the political dynamics in the region.

The Chinese Church delegates described the problems and challenges of the Church in China in recent times. One of the primary tasks of the church since 1949 has been to remove the image which was projected in the past that Christianity is a foreign religion, and that the church is a foreign institution. The primary concern was to discern the church's role in the political situation in China and to identify with the struggles of the people. The period of the Cultural Revolution was a time of severe opposition to the life of the organised churches and to Christian people.

During the past two years, however, about one hundred churches have been organised in various cities in China, and the Nanking Union Seminary has resumed theological education with the admission of forty-eight students to its first class in March 1981. The Bible has been reprinted and the Christian periodical Tien Feng has resumed publication.

In order to understand the positions which the present church leadership in China adopt, consideration must be taken of the peculiar history of the Christian movement in China. There are certain issues like the Three-Self Patriotic Movement which cannot be understood apart from an understanding of the historical experience of the Chinese Church.

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The "foreign" image of the church, for example. The Asian Churches know this only too well, they have all been accused of following an alien religion. However, the problem is compounded in China when the government attacked the various forms of Western political, economic and cultural dominance and established the People's Republic of China. This placed the Christian Church in China in a very difficult situation. Therefore, one of the primary considerations for the Christian leaders in China was to cut off as far as possible all foreign ties especially with the West. At the same time it made conscious attempts to relate to the emerging China. The institution to further this was the Three-Self Patriotic Movement which affirmed the principles of self-support, self-government and self-propagation.

During the confused days of the Cultural Revolution, even this movement could hardly function. It is difficult, in the circumstances, for them to receive funds and personnel from foreign sources. It could jeopardise their attempts to project a new image; it might even put the clock back. Funds and personnel from outside China could weaken their determination to exercise responsible stewardship not only in managing their own church life but also in developing their own theological understanding of the life and mission of the Church in China.

Bishop K.H. Ting described this clearly when he said that the Chinese church must raise a "protective tariff" at the present time in order to develop the Church in China.

This "protective tariff" should be respected and the good intentions of other Christians should not impede the indigenous development of Chinese Church life. There is also the question of the internal relationships of a comparatively small Christian Church within China, with the state's official policy of atheism on the one hand and of religious freedom on the other. It is important that external relationships should not mark the image of the Christian Church as it seeks to relate to the Chinese people. There may well be a limited scope for foreign relationships, especially relationships with Western churches, and those outside China must respect the limitations which are a consequence of the priorities they have deliberately set for themselves. The fact that they have been in consultation with Asian Christian leaders and plan to participate in international consultations later this year proves their desire to relate to the Christian community outside China. Their present stance should not be viewed as a rejection of the international Christian community. People must have the patience and the humility to recognise that the Chinese Christians know best what their priorities should be.

Nor are the motives of those who want to go in or establish relationships entirely altruistic or Christian. For example, the sending of Bibles into China has apparently become a political issue. Many Christian individuals and organizations are concerned over the fact that there is a "scarcity" of Bibles in the country. They have launched campaigns to raise money to "smuggle" Bibles into China. There have been cases where anti-government political tracts were smuggled into the country, hidden in Bibles. The whole operation is an embarrassment to the Chinese church in so far as it challenges the integrity of the Chinese government and the priorities of Chinese Christians.

(more)

It was reported that there is considerable theological ferment in the Chinese church. Christian intellectuals are on the one hand related to the common people and on the other dedicated to the work of the church. They try to find common ground and seek a common language with the people who are struggling to work for the future of China. There is thus an ongoing search for truth and goodness.

#### CAMPAIGN CALLED FOR TO IMPLEMENT AND REINFORCE ARMS EMBARGO

London (EPS) - It is imperative that all governments, parliaments, unions and other organizations concerned with the liberation of South Africa and Namibia, promote a world-wide campaign to press the major Western Powers to cooperate in implementing and reinforcing the arms embargo against South Africa, declared an International Seminar, organized by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid, and held in London 1-3 April 1981.

The Seminar was attended by representatives of United Nations bodies, governments, anti-Apartheid movements as well as members of Parliament and experts. They requested the full implementation of Resolution 418, adopted by the Security Council of the United Nations in 1977, which made mandatory an arms embargo against South Africa.

The delegates accused in particular the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, France and Israel of ignoring the UN embargo and continuing military and nuclear collaboration. Therefore, South Africa's programme of military expansion and nuclear development has further advanced and is in fact producing "an apartheid nuclear bomb".

The Seminar adopted a series of recommendations in order to make effective the embargo on arms and the supply of petroleum products. (Oil being a vital military commodity, no embargo is therefore complete without a total prohibition of petrol, it was declared in London).

The Seminar's proposals included the following:

- All states should enact effective legislation on the arms embargo and monitor and enforce it scrupulously, and severely punish all violators. This legislation should cover direct sales, transfers through third parties, and concessionary licences to produce arms in South Africa;
- the term "arms and related material" should cover oil, computers, transfer of military technology, and "dual-purpose" equipment for military use;
- the recommendations submitted in September 1980 by the Security Council Committee established in pursuance of Resolution 418, should be adopted without further delay.

According to the Seminar any assistance accorded to South Africa in the military and nuclear fields "is a crime against the people of South Africa, Namibia and frontline States, a threat to international peace, a challenge to the authority of the United Nations and an offense against the conscience of mankind".



COMMUNITY OF WOMEN AND MEN  
STUDY - US REGIONAL MEETING

Stony Point, New York (EPS) - Proposals to increase the partnership of women and men in the church - at international, national and local levels - were hammered out here 25-26 March, by 72 people from 18 denominations. They attended the US section of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) study on The Community of Women and Men in the Church.

Their proposals will be taken to an international consultation in Sheffield, England, in July, this year, where the results of the seven regional meetings on the study will be evaluated. Recommendations from this consultation will be presented to the WCC's Central Committee in Dresden, German Democratic Republic, in August.

The proposals were based on written reports from 75 groups in the US which engaged in the study. A major issue at the consultation was inclusivity in theological language (using words which are not tied to one sex or the other but include both), related both to the people of God and to metaphors used to describe God.

Most participants agreed that traditional phrases such as Christ died "for all men" ought to simply say Christ died for "all" - this being more inclusive and more in keeping with the intention of the original text.

There was also agreement that symbols for God and for authority in the church are conventionally male symbols. But there was a variety of views expressed about whether these symbols ought to be changed, and if so, how?

Participants also agreed that the church should examine its structures for signs of sex discrimination. Protestants and Roman Catholics tend to see the church hierarchy as reinforcing male dominance rather than promoting the reciprocity and mutuality of women and men.

The Orthodox Churches, on the other hand, agreed that church hierarchy, as such, is not a problem as it fosters order and harmony in the church.

The Stony Point Consultation committed itself to the ultimate goal of equal representation of women and men in the WCC presidium, all committees and the executive staff. However, as an immediate goal it was suggested that the 1983 Assembly name at least two women presidents; that women should constitute no fewer than one-third of all committee members and 20 per cent of executive staff. In addition, it was said, the Moderator of the Central Committee should be a woman.

It was also suggested that the WCC develop models of shared leadership of women and men in local churches, produce "understandable" bible studies, and examine the legal, civil and human rights of women.

In addition, the consultation asked the WCC's Faith and Order Commission to integrate the findings of the community study into all its studies, particularly that on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.

Two new studies were recommended - one, to look at servanthood, exploring the issues of authority, mission and service, and the other, on language and images of God.

(more)

The meeting also made specific recommendations to the National Council of Churches of Christ (NCCC) in the USA. One of these was a near unanimous request that the NCCC implement immediately its decision to produce "an inclusive language lectionary" (a series of Bible readings to be used in worship).

Both the WCC and the NCCC were asked to include all its staff in the community study, and the NCCC to begin a new study on ordination and authority; to ensure that the recommendations from the Stony Point and Sheffield meetings be integrated into its whole work, and to develop new images of shared partnership with Jesus as the model of power.

In some general recommendations the consultation asked churches to eliminate sexism from hymnals and other materials, to repent the exclusion of women from decision-making, and to oppose programmes that "militate against marginalized people".

EPS

#### A NEW TYPE OF EVANGELIZATION CAMPAIGN IN THE CARIBBEAN

Kingston, Jamaica (EPS) - A month-long evangelization crusade in the Caribbean concluded on 9 March, with a mass rally here. Organized by the World Methodist Council and directed by Dr Alan Walker "The Mission to the 80's" throughout the Caribbean has touched more than 50,000 people in the Bahamas, Barbados, St. Vincent and Jamaica.

"Jamaican Methodism will never be the same again" said one religious leader from that country. The local press spoke of "a new crusade". Contrary to previous evangelization crusades "Mission to the 80's" goes beyond the usual personal evangelism. A strong Christian witness was given on such issues as youth unemployment, poverty, racism, capital punishment, violence and war.

"Caribbean society stands at the cross roads. It feels the pull of Cuban Communism and American capitalism. The Mission", says a press release from the organizers, "sought to offer a third way: a Christian society based on a personal freedom unknown under communism and a social equality and justice beyond capitalism".

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# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 7 MAY 1981

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WSCF GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO  
BE HELD IN USA

Geneva (EPS) - Some 250 participants are expected to take part in the 28th General Assembly of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF). Scheduled 11-22 August, at the University of San Francisco, California, the meeting will bring together delegates from 100 national Student Christian Movements, leaders and friends representing all Christian traditions.

The theme of the Assembly will be "Come let us rise up and build together". This theme, says the WSCF, is a continuation of the Federation's focus on "Christian Witness and the Struggle for Liberation" during the last four years.

In announcing the Assembly the WSCF states that: "After the disarray which followed the late 60's and early 70's, the student movement is entering a period of serious reflection and search for new forms of existence. The WSCF draws sustenance from the renewal of the student involvement in the building of the World Community. It attempts to be a relevant Christian minority contributing to this process, on behalf of, and from within the churches."

The WSCF General Assembly was last hosted in North America in 1949, when it was held in Whitby, Canada.

EPS

METROPOLITAN FILARET - NEW HEAD OF  
EXTERNAL CHURCH RELATIONS

Moscow (EPS) - Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk, was, on 14 April, appointed Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations, by the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. He succeeds Metropolitan Juvenaly, who has resigned for health reasons.

From 1973 to 1978 Metropolitan Filaret was Archbishop of Berlin and Central Europe. After the death of Metropolitan Nikodim in 1978, he left Berlin and became Metropolitan of Minsk. He is also the Exarch to Western Europe.

In a letter addressed to His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and all Russia, Metropolitan Juvenaly asked to be relieved of the post of Chairman of the Department of External Church Relations, a position he has held since 1972. He explained that he was no longer physically able to carry the heavy work load. He also gave four names of possible candidates. The name of Metropolitan Filaret headed the list.

EPS



WCC EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR  
LYON HUNGER STRIKERS

Geneva (EPS) - The Migration Secretariat and the Programme to Combat Racism of the World Council of Churches (WCC) have expressed their solidarity with the three people who, since 2 April, have been on "an unlimited hunger strike" in Lyon (France), to protest against the expulsion from France of young people over 18 years of age from immigrant families.

In a telegram dated 23 April, the two WCC departments "working together in the support of the struggle of migrant workers for their human rights" aligned themselves with the Rev. Jean Costil (Reformed Church of France), Father Christian Delorme (Roman Catholic) and Hamid B., a 32-year-old Algerian born in France.

The hunger strikers are carrying out an "action against the expulsion and for the recognition of the rights of the sons and daughters of immigrants to France". By this action, they are demanding that the French authorities take seriously the lot of the second generation of immigrants, set-up a government commission to study their problems and impose a moratorium on the present expulsions.

Among the various organizations, religious and others who, both in France and abroad, have expressed their support for the hunger strikers, are the French Protestant Federation and CIMADE (the ecumenical aid agency). In a communiqué issued on 7 April, these two organizations denounced "the return procedures and the expulsion of young immigrants" and asked the Ministry of the Interior "to stop expulsions from the French territory of young immigrants born and brought up in France". The hunger-strikers estimate that each year some 5,000 young people of immigrant families, (1,500 from North Africa) are expelled for lack of resources, or no proof of employment or, in a certain number of cases, for juvenile delinquency.

It is estimated that in 1978 in France there were around one million young people of less than 20 years of age born of immigrant parents. Many of these young people are today unemployed or have never had a job and are subject to administrative and police harrassment, say those associated with the hunger strikers.

A number of those expelled return clandestinely to France. This is what makes the hunger strikers say that expulsion is "an inefficient and criminal-making measure because those who return are in an irregular situation and totally marginalized".

A negotiation committee has opened discussions with the Ministry of the Interior. Father Delorme has, in addition, appealed to the United Nations sub-committee on Human Rights. At the end of April the hunger-strikers were in a very feeble condition and hospitalization of one of them was being considered.

BAPTIST LEADERS DISCUSS PEACE ISSUES  
AT INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR IN MOSCOW

Moscow, USSR (EPS) - More than 45 Baptist leaders from ten countries met in the USSR, at the beginning of April, to discuss religious issues of mutual concern. "Confidence Building - Choosing Life" was the theme of this international seminar, that was attended by Baptists from mainly socialist countries. The All-Union Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptist (AUCECB) had extended the invitation and graciously hosted the conference.

The meetings opened with an address by the Rev. A. Klimenko, president of the AUCEB, in which he emphasized the important tasks Christians have in establishing peace in this world.

He also expressed his gratitude that the Soviet government and the Ministry of Cults had granted the opportunity for this international meeting of theologians and denominational leaders.

The countries represented were: Bulgaria, Denmark, German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, USA and USSR.

EPS

URC APPROVES COVENANTING  
PROPOSALS IN UK

London (EPS) - Proposals that five English Churches should covenant together as the first step towards organic unity have now overcome a second major hurdle when they won the approval of a substantial majority at the general assembly of the United Reformed Church (URC), meeting in Bournemouth on 28 April.

The proposals would mean the URC accepting Episcopacy into its system as part of the means whereby all five covenanting churches - the others being the Church of England, the Methodists, the Moravians, and the Churches of Christ - would agree to recognize each other's ministry and sacraments. Since it represents the union of the Congregationalists and the (English) Presbyterians, the URC has inherited a healthy tradition of distrust for Bishops.

But that has not stopped it from endorsing the proposals, which will return to next year's Assembly for a more thorough vetting. The Church of England's General Synod gave the proposals provisional approval in February, though by majorities that may not be enough to ensure final approval in July 1982.

The URC Assembly also gave final approval to plans for union with the Churches of Christ, which is to come into effect in September this year - reducing the number of churches actually covenanting to four from the original five.

EPS



NEW PRESIDENT FOR ANTI-APARTHEID  
MOVEMENT

London (EPS) - Trevor Huddleston, Archbishop of the Church of the Province of the Indian Ocean, has been elected as the new President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement here.

He succeeds Bishop Ambrose Reeves, who died in December 1980.

It was in 1943, at 30 years of age, that Trevor Huddleston was appointed Priest-in-Charge of the Sophiatown and Orlando Anglican missions in the Diocese of Johannesburg, known today as Soweto. While there he emerged as an outspoken and prophetic opponent of apartheid. His book "Naught for your Comfort", marked a turning point in the understanding of millions of people in the English-speaking world about the evils of white domination in South Africa.

In 1978, while Bishop of Stepney, UK, Trevor Huddleston was elected Bishop of Mauritius and, later the same year Archbishop in the Province of the Indian Ocean.

The Archbishop has been active in the Anti-Apartheid Movement since 1959, when he, together with Julius Nyerere, addressed the AAM's founding meeting.

EPS

NAMIBIAN BISHOP  
RESIGNS

London (EPS) - The Right Rev. Colin Winter, Bishop of Namibia-in-exile, has resigned his see because of ill health, the UK Church Times reports. Bishop Winter, 52, suffered a serious heart attack earlier this year. In a letter to his clergy in Namibia, the Bishop says that he is resigning immediately "because of my deep personal love for you". Bishop Winter had asked the Suffragan Bishop James Kauluma, and the Namibian clergy for their advice about his future. They had reluctantly said, that it would probably be best for his sake as much as for that of the church if he were to step down.

Bishop Winter was appointed to the then diocese of Damaraland in 1968. In March 1972 he was expelled from Namibia by the South African authorities. He has continued, from his London base, to be an indefatigable campaigner for Namibian independence.

EPS





#### MORE WOMEN IN PARISH THAN TOWN COUNCILS

Hanover (EPS) - Statistics just published by the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD) Hanover, show that women are more widely represented in church parish councils than in the town councils of the Federal Republic. Figures for the parish council elections for 1976 to 1980 show that out of 94,659 elected councillors 26,935 were women (28.5 per cent). However, in the municipal councils, women represent only 19.4 per cent.

Even though women's presence in church councils has increased six-fold since 1955 (4.6 per cent to 28.5 per cent) this still does not reflect the 54 per cent of registered parish members who are women, said the EKD in Hanover.

EPS

#### BERLIN-BRANDENBURG CHOOSES NEW BISHOP

Berlin, GDR (EPS) - On 26 April, the Synod of the Church of Berlin-Brandenburg, German Democratic Republic (GDR) elected, on the second ballot, the General Superintendent of the Cottbus district, Gottfried Forck, as their new Bishop. He will succeed Bishop Albrecht Schönherr, who will reach the retirement age of 70, in September. Gottfried Forck will not, however, be a candidate to succeed Bishop Schönherr as President of the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR.

Mr Forck was born in Thuringia in 1923. He was taken prisoner during the Second World War, and on his return in 1947 he studied theology in Bethel, Heidelberg and West Berlin. From 1954 to 1959 he was the Protestant Student Chaplain in Berlin (GDR); then for four years he was parish minister and in 1963 he succeeded Albrecht Schönherr, as head of the pastoral seminary of the Church of Berlin-Brandenburg. Since January 1973, Gottfried Forck has been the General Superintendent of the district of Cottbus.

Mr Forck's obtaining a two-third's majority at only the second ballot over Christoph Demke, the theological secretary and deputy director of the secretariat of the Federation of Churches, was a surprise which, according to observers, meant that the delegates wanted a Bishop with a lot of pastoral experience and direct contact with the problems and concerns experienced daily in the parishes.

EPS

NEW BISHOP ELECTED IN  
UGANDA

Namirembe, Uganda (EPS) - The Rev. Canon Eustace K. Kamanyire, has been elected Bishop of the Anglican Ruwenzori Diocese here.

Canon Kamanyire, 46, served, between 1972 and 1978 as Lecturer, Vice-Principal and Principal of Bishop Tucker Theological College, Mukono. During his period as Principal he narrowly escaped death with head cuts inflicted when his new college van was stolen in 1977. He returned to Uganda after the liberation in 1979, having served for one-and-a-half years as Lecturer at St. Philip's Bible School, Maseno, Kenya.

EPS

INTER-CHURCH AID PROJECTS  
APPROVED FOR EUROPE

Geneva (EPS) - The major part of the US\$ 4.2 million necessary to finance some 65 inter-church aid projects in Europe in 1982 will go to national programmes directed by the minority churches in southern Europe as well as to theological formation in various eastern and southern European churches.

These projects, together with those chosen from other continents will form the 1982 list of projects which presents the financial needs to inter-church aid agencies, churches and local parishes the world over. The 65 projects were retained out of the 80 submitted to the Europe regional working group of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Conference of European Churches (CEC) during a meeting in Zurich, 6-10 April. Representatives of 16 European countries both East and West took part in the meeting.

All projects concerning "The Third World in Europe" submitted to the group were accepted. Among these were projects dealing with unemployment and retraining courses, especially for young people, and projects concerned with minorities in different European societies.

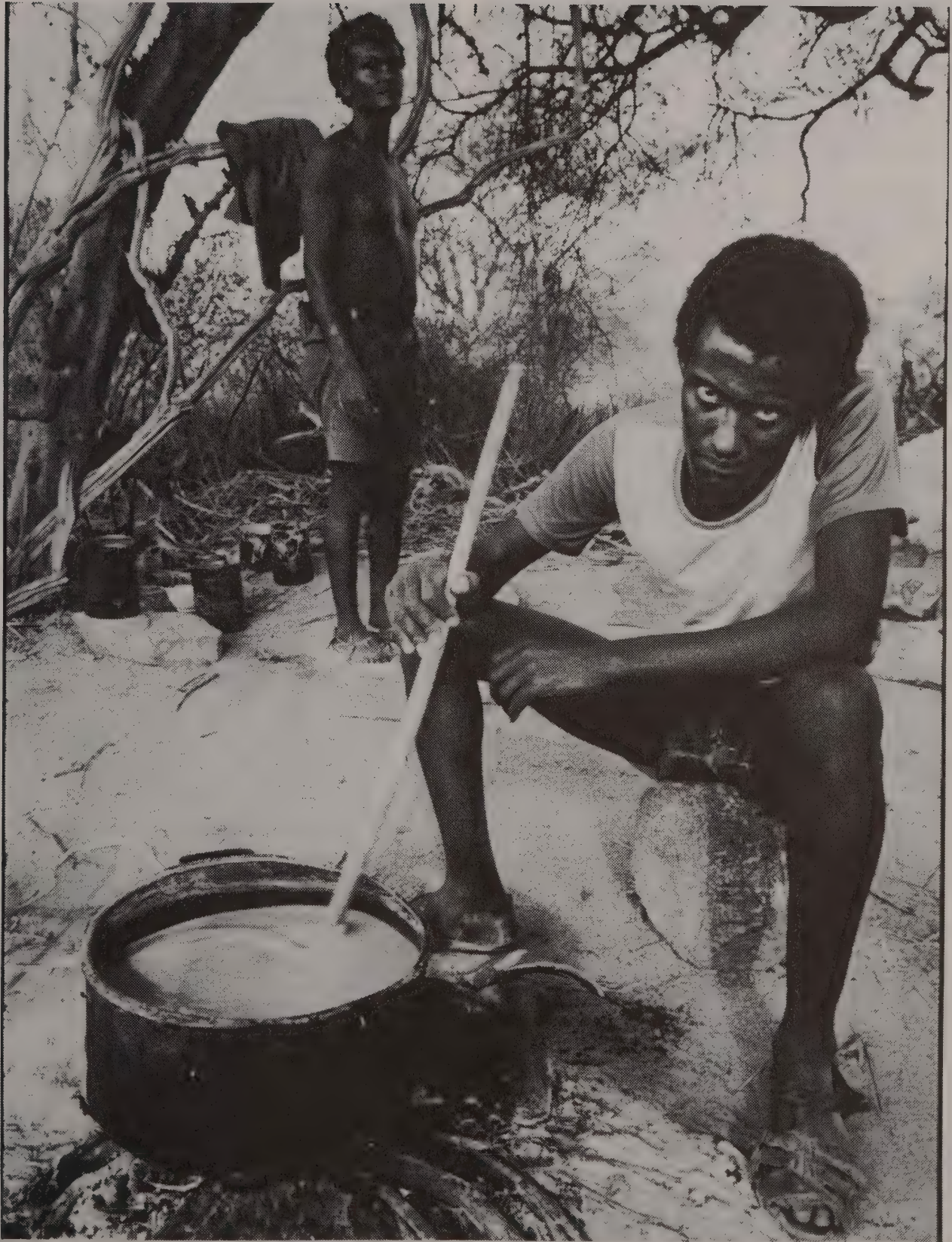
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MAY 1981

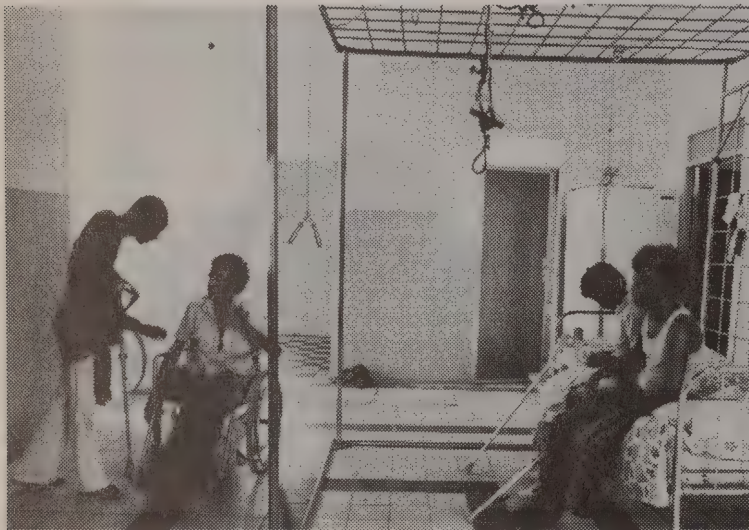
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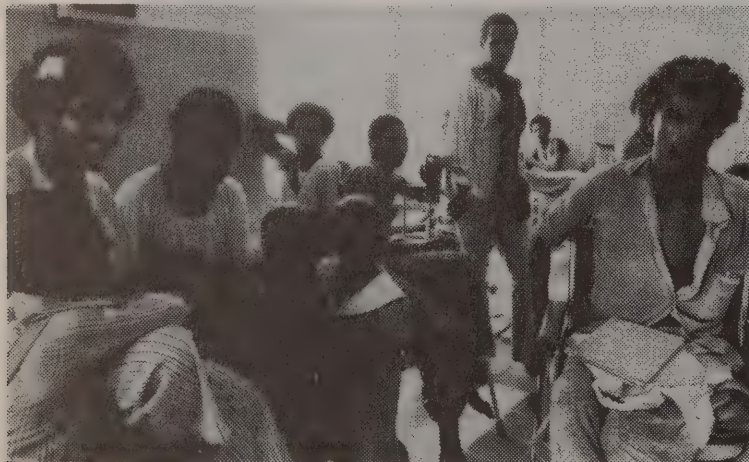




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## REFUGEES IN THE SUDA

There are some 500,000 refugees in the Sudan of these about 390,000 come from the Eritrea region of Ethiopia where a war is going on

The Sudan has taken a positive line in granting asylum to refugees and in 1980 was the first African country to call a pledge conference to seek support for its refugee aid programmes.

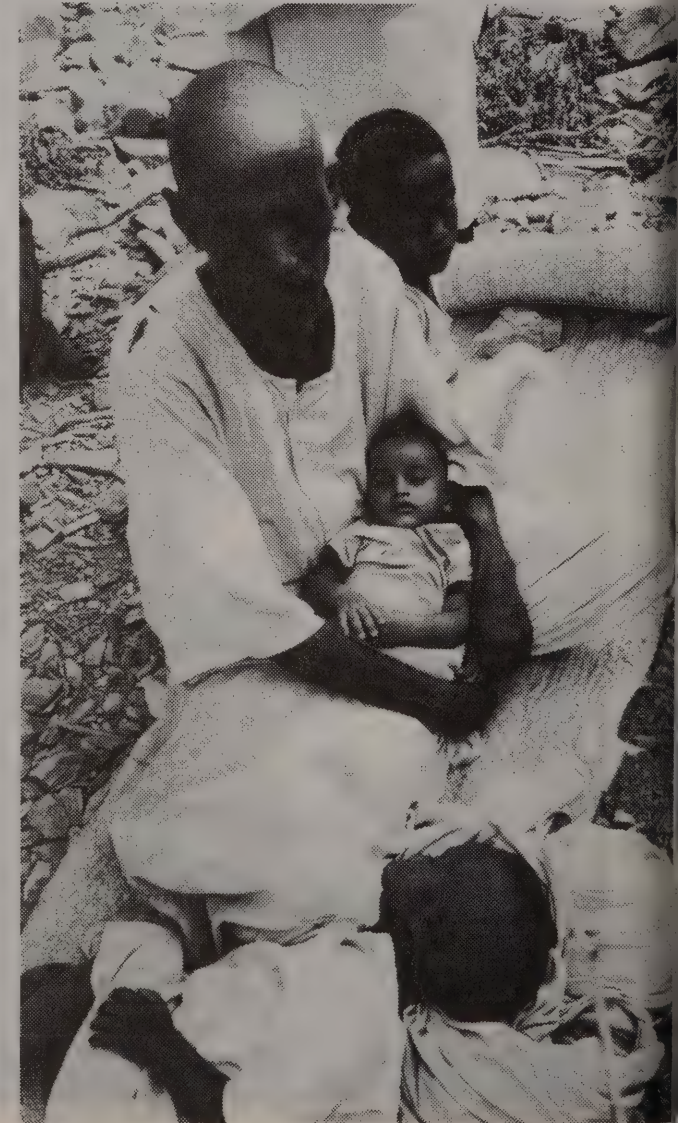
The World Council of Churches through the Sudan Council of Churches funds a number of relief and development programmes among the refugees.

(2615 to 2618, 2620 to 2622) Eritrean Religious Association rehabilitation hospital in Port Sudan.

(2619, 2623) Refugees from Ethiopia in the Sudan.

Front Page and 2624. Guerrilla fighters' camp

Photos: LIEVIC/Dutch Interchurch Aid.



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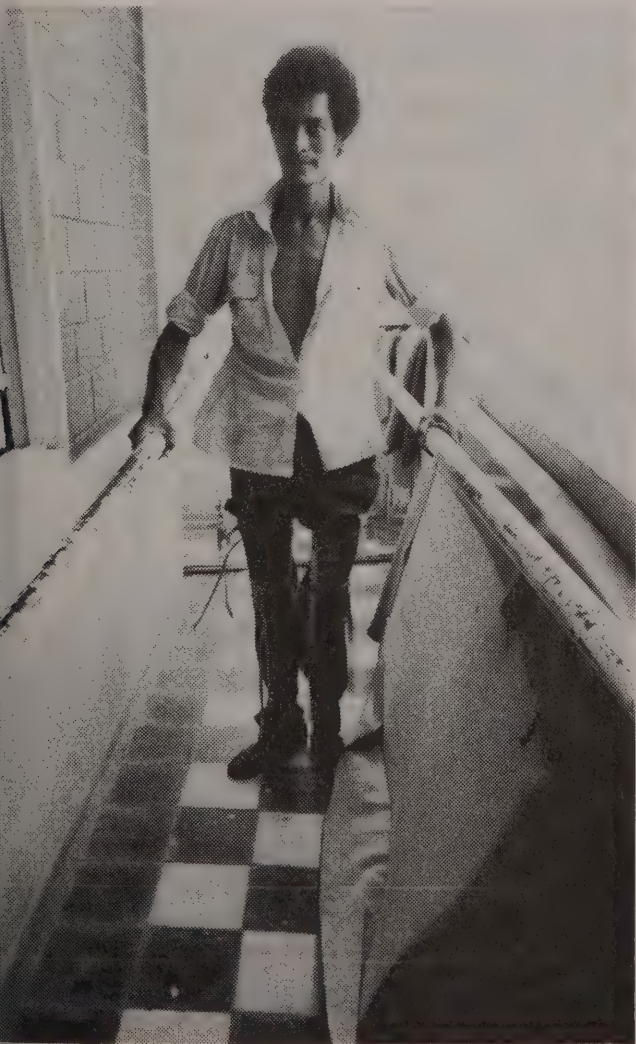




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INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF

DISABLED PERSON'S

Some reflections  
of cartoonist

Colin Wheeler







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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 21 MAY 1981

WCC ANNOUNCES PROGRAMME FOR  
VISIT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

Geneva (EPS) - The World Council of Churches (WCC) has today (7 May) made public the programme for the three-hour visit of Pope John Paul II on 5 June 1981.

Apart from his time with the International Labour Organization (ILO) the Pope's visit to the WCC will be the longest he will make to an international organization during his one-and-a-half day stay in Geneva.

The WCC's Executive Committee in February, this year, expressed the wish that the visit should be "a significant ecumenical event". The programme now shows that substantial time will be devoted to discussions and a worship service thereby indicating much more than a formal visit only.

Pope John Paul II, will be received at 9 am at the Ecumenical Centre by the officers of the WCC.

At the official welcome the Rev. Dr. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the WCC, and Pope John Paul II, will make major statements, qualified in both Rome and Geneva as "particularly important" for ecumenical collaboration.

From 10-11 am a private meeting between representatives of the WCC and the other international ecclesiastical organizations located at the Ecumenical Centre, will provide the opportunity to discuss the present ecumenical situation, its difficulties and promises with His Holiness. The theme of "Common Witness" is expected to provide the focus for the visit. Common witness includes all that the Churches can do together ranging from mission and evangelism to social action programmes, despite the differences which still exist in faith and church order.

This meeting will be followed by an act of worship (from 11-11.45 am) in the Chapel of the Ecumenical Centre. It is expected that during the service Cardinal Jan Willebrands, President of the Vatican's Secretariat for Christian Unity, will read a joint affirmation from the WCC and the Vatican on the theme of common witness.

The Pope will be in Switzerland from 1-5 June, on an official visit.

EPS



CHURCH MUST NOW FACE TNCs  
ON HOME GROUND SAYS CONSULTATION

Brussels (EPS) - Churches campaigning on the operations of transnational corporations (TNCs) in developing countries are now being forced to confront the alarming impact of big monopolies on their home ground as well. This was the conclusion of a Western European consultation on TNCs which took place in Brussels, Belgium, 26-30 April.

The gathering was jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) programme on transnational corporations, the Netherlands Council of Churches and the European Ecumenical Commission for Church and Society, in Belgium. It brought together 60 church development workers, industrial chaplains and trade union representatives - plus business executives who had been involved in discussions with the churches on their companies' activities.

"With the deepening of the economic crisis there has been a broader questioning of the nature of the present Western European economic system and of the TNCs as major actors within that system", the meeting declared.

Some TNCs had created job opportunities, diversified industrial production and accelerated the development of technology. However, their positive contributions, it was felt, were being outweighed by negative effects especially during this recent period of recession.

Major industries were being increasingly swallowed up by a handful of huge companies, participants heard. The present economic situation was leading to more mergers, more shifting of production and factory closures - with disastrous consequences for whole communities and for national economics.

Special presentations on the car industry and agribusiness illustrated these trends. And examples from Brazil and the Philippines highlighted the vulnerability of TNC workers the world over and the need for greater cooperation between them.

Efforts by the West European churches to influence TNC's had been patchy and narrowly-based, it was felt, except on specific campaigns such as those against bank loans to South Africa. Dialogue with TNC executives, although it could influence them as individuals, could not be expected to "convert" corporations. "It is a limited form of involvement, usually most valid as part of a broader set of actions", the meeting heard.

In line with a vision of a just, participatory and sustainable society, solidarity work with trade unions, the labour movement and the unemployed should receive greater priority, whether from within Western Europe or the third world, said the meeting. Grants from the churches to such groups could also be valuable, not only as a way of building "sources of countervailing power" to TNCs, but to raise the consciousness of congregations.

The churches should analyse their own share of responsibility as part of the economic system, reflecting on their own conduct as employers, consumers and investors, the meeting added. All attempts to make TNCs more accountable should be supported as well. Participants heard of the  
(more)

struggle for a World Health Organization (WHO) code of conduct to regulate the promotion of baby milk. And they urged churches to back legislation currently before the European Parliament which would oblige TNCs to disclose more information.

The consultation was the second in the current series of meetings being held around the world by the WCC programme on TNCs. Participants recommended that the programme be continued and strengthened so that it could devote attention to specific sectors of TNC activity such as food, armaments and energy and go on helping the churches to pool information and experiences of their TNC work.

EPS

#### RUSSIAN CHURCH'S PUBLICATIONS TAKE HISTORICAL STEP

Moscow (EPS) - For the first time in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church the Prayer Book and Psalter have been published in a combined form.

The combined book, of which 150,000 copies have been printed, is intended mainly for lay people. It contains prayers for use every day in the home. Since the second world war, the Psalter has been published once before and the Prayer Book twice.

Another new publication from the church is the Horologion, or Book of Hours. This book, of which 20,000 copies have been printed, contains daily services which are read and sung in churches.

The second part of the liturgical book "the Psalter with Services" was published at the end of April. This book is for use by choirs and readers and contains, in addition to the Psalms, the services of the Horologion other services, prayers and hymns in honour of the Saints who are also listed. Twenty-thousand copies have been printed.

Also published at the end of April was the first part of the third book in a new series of twelve liturgical works started by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1979. This new series is part of the search for new material pertaining to the lives of the saints and liturgical materials which can be of theological and historical scientific value. Each book, called "Menaion" includes colour and monochrome prints of icons, frescoes and engravings.

This new series of "Menaia" is dedicated to the millenium of the baptism of Russ, which will be celebrated in 1988.

EPS



GLOBAL SOLIDARITY IN THEOLOGICAL  
EDUCATION:CONSULTATION PLANNED

Geneva (EPS) - A challenge to people involved in theological education to pursue justice and peace concerns on both a local and a global level will be the theme of a consultation to be held 12-15 July, in Toronto, Canada.

Called by the Programme on Theological Education (PTE) of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the consultation will bring together some 90 people with the aim of defining goals and strategies for global solidarity in theological education. It is expected that this will give theological institutions and their constituencies a new global perspective to their teaching and their commitments.

The PTE was created in 1977 with a mandate to promote the ecumenical concerns of theological education around the world. Eight preparatory regional meetings have or will take place before the Canadian meeting in preparation for the North American event.

The meeting is to be held in consultation with the Association of Theological Schools in the US and Canada, the Seminary Group of Professional Church Leadership, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, the Coordinating Committee on Theological Education in Canada and the Fund for Theological Education.

EPS

NEW HEAD FOR SWAZILAND  
CHURCHES

Manzini, Swaziland (EPS) - Mrs Eunice Nokuthulu Sowazi, 49, has been elected the General Secretary of the Council of Swaziland Churches.

Mrs Sowazi will be the first woman to head the Council when she takes up her new position in October this year.

Since 1972 Mrs Sowazi has been the Staff Nurse in charge of the King Sobhuza II Clinic, Manzini. She is a public health nurse, and holds a certificate in business studies from the University of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. In February 1981, she completed a one-year programme in nursing administration, under the Institute of Development Management (Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland).

Mrs Sowazi is married with three boys and a girl. Her husband is director of Shell Oil, Swaziland. The family belongs to the Roman Catholic Church, one of the member churches of the Council.

EPS

LEBANON IN  
CONFLICT

The Middle East Council of Churches' Information Department supplied the following analysis:

Beirut (EPS) - The latest outbreak of fighting in Lebanon, including the lamentable shelling of Zahlé with its 200,000 inhabitants, and East Beirut, is but a new episode in the ongoing disturbances and upheavals in the region, the foremost of which is the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Zahlé and East Beirut both have a predominantly Christian population. This fact could lead to the conclusion that the Christians are an isolated target for attack.

The real nature of the conflict, however, is purely political between the Phalangist party, operating from the predominantly Christian areas, and the Syrian military forces, present in Lebanon as a deterrent force. In addition, the Palestine Liberation Army which takes its order from the Syrian high command is sometimes active.

What must be underlined, then, in the present upheavals is that despite the fact that the Christian community is the victim of the situation, and despite the religious overtones of the Lebanese conflict in general, the latest incidents do not have religious implications between Christians and Muslims either in Lebanon or in the region generally.

The Phalangists state that they are waging their struggle on behalf of all Lebanese. This includes the Muslims who, the Phalangists believe, are not yet free to join them in this struggle because of the presence of the Syrians and the Palestinians.

The Phalangists also claim that Arab countries have supported them both politically and with military equipment during these latest incidents.

The core of the Lebanese problem, therefore, amounts to the recovery of Lebanese unity, independence and sovereignty over all its territory and, at the same time, the accommodation of this Lebanese national interest with the Syrian and Palestinian interests and presence in the country - a necessity they believe for their national security vis-à-vis Israel.

In the midst of all this disruption the countries in the region are continuing their development programmes. The international community benefits from the rich crude oil production by shipping its products to a booming Middle Eastern market.

At the same time, the competing regional and international powers confine their conflicts within Lebanon as a way of forcing each other to conform to an overall settlement of the Middle East problem. This is done without any concern for the human suffering and destruction imposed on Lebanon.

It is now internationally acknowledged that, against the will of its citizens, Lebanon is being forced into becoming a battlefield for settling regional and possibly even international accounts. Its heterogeneous character, its guiding principle of tolerance, its traditionally weak central authority as well as its distance from the oil fields vital to world economy, all go to make it particularly vulnerable to actions of this kind.

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These factors, then, are conducive to all parties to carry on their battles and there is little or no fear that these conflicts will spill over to set the rest of the region aflame.

Having recognized these factors in the present conflict the appeal must be to spare this country from further suffering and destruction. Lebanon should not be sacrificed in the process of finding a solution to the just Palestinian cause or in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Lebanon must necessarily, both for the region and for the international community, be a place where the various religious communities, particularly Christians and Muslims, and the various political groupings can live in peace. Its unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity must be recovered and guaranteed for the future.

All initiatives and mediations must be reactivated to end the bloodshed. Such initiatives must stop all acts of hostility. They must create a favourable atmosphere for negotiations and aim for national unity and new agreements with the Syrian government and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

The Lebanese president and government should be given all support necessary to enable them, in strength and in freedom, to bring the divided Lebanese into a state of understanding and national unity.

Consequently, the Lebanese army should be continuously strengthened and empowered to re-instate order and security in the whole Lebanese territory. In addition, pressure should be exerted on Israel to cease all attacks against both Lebanese and Palestinians in South Lebanon.

In the final analysis the security of Israel and Lebanon depends on the recognition of Palestinian self-identity and on the establishment of a just peace with the Palestinians and the Arabs.

We call upon the world's Christians to support the Christian Lebanese as they struggle to live side-by-side with Muslims in a united Lebanon devoted to the defence of justice, development and peace in the Middle East.

#### CHURCH ACTION

The Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) has, deliberately, not issued any statements. It has agreed with member churches in Lebanon to leave this task to meetings between the Maronite, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches.

However, the MECC is facilitating contacts between churches and religious communities towards understanding and peace.

A number of actions have been taken by various church leaders in the region including a summit meeting of MECC church leaders held in the Maronite Patriarchate. This meeting issued a statement appealing for international mediation in the crisis.

In addition, the three Patriarchs of Antioch, Ignatios IV (Greek Orthodox), Ignatios Zakka I (Syrian Orthodox), and Maximos V (Greek Catholic) sent a letter to President Sarkis of Lebanon.

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Church leaders have also met political leaders in attempts to heal the divisions. For example, Patriarch Ignatios IV, President of the MECC, met with President Assad of Syria to appeal for a ceasefire and to offer mediation. Patriarch Khoreich, of the Maronite Church has addressed appeals to the United Nations, King Khaled of Saudi Arabia and to Pope John Paul II, for mediation in the conflict.

EPS

#### CHURCH AND TOURISM - INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PLANNED

Geneva (EPS) - An international conference on church and tourism is to be held 2-6 November, in Stockholm, Sweden. Among other things, the conference will focus on the social, economic and ethical consequences of Western tourism on third world countries.

Some 45 people are expected to take part including 15 from the third world. The consultation, jointly sponsored by the World Council of Churches sub-unit on Renewal and Congregational Life and a Swedish Planning Committee, will provide opportunities for representatives of churches and people in third world countries to express their concern about Western tourism as it is experienced in the host countries.

This consultation follows a workshop on tourism held in Manila, Philippines in September 1980, which declared that tourism has become one of the most important socio-economic activities of our time. It recognized tourism as "a huge new phenomenon and one which is affecting every person on this planet".

In addition to tourism's effects on the third world the Stockholm consultation will look at the various efforts made by churches in order to reach people on vacation; on preparations for tourists before they go abroad and on programmes for the reception of tourists including information about cultural and spiritual life within a given setting. The positive and negative aspects of tourism will also be studied with a view to looking for alternative forms of tourism.

The conference programme will include lectures on the theological background of church and leisure and a guided tour of Uppsala Cathedral together with a presentation of the possibilities and problems of the local congregation to meet the streams of tourists.

EPS



TUTU READY TO WORK WITH GOVERNMENT  
FOR PEACEFUL CHANGE

Johannesburg (EPS) - In his report to a "new style" annual conference of the South African Council of Churches (SACC), Bishop Desmond Tutu said he was ready to work with Prime Minister P.W. Botha, to bring about change by peaceful means.

The Bishop, the SACC's General Secretary, said that "If the Prime Minister intends to bring about a new South Africa, more just, more equitable for all South Africans, then we want to pledge all our resources to working with him for the achievement of that goal".

The five day conference opened on 4 May. Originally planned to be held in Hammanskraal, it was transferred to Johannesburg in order that a large part of the proceedings could be open to the public.

According to Bishop Tutu, speaking about the SACC's annual meeting at a Press Conference on 1 May, this new style will give people the possibility to see what the SACC does and, to see if the clichés circulated about the organization correspond with reality. He added that people will be able to see how important to the Council is the spiritual aspect of the work and "what we mean when we talk about God and Jesus Christ".

The SACC is exposing itself voluntarily to the critical gaze of both friends and enemies and will demonstrate that as a Christian organization we are of good faith, said Bishop Tutu.

With the theme "The Church of Jesus-Christ, the Servant of the Poor" the conference will discuss, among other things, the situation of those people who have been relocated by force into the new living zones, as a consequence of the apartheid policies and the creation of the bantustans. According to Bishop Tutu, the conference should also shed new light on the difficult situation of the poor, the powerless and the voiceless. In addition, the Bishop believes that the conference should pass less resolutions but approve more concrete action programmes.

The SACC groups together more than 15 million Christians in South Africa, both black and white. Because of its anti-apartheid position it has often fallen foul of the government, and of conservative whites in the country and within the organization. One of the most recent measures taken against the organization was the withdrawal for the second time, of the passport of Bishop Tutu.

EPS

P E N T E C O S T 1981

Message from the Presidents of the  
World Council of Churches

"WE BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE LORD AND LIFE-GIVER"  
(Nicene Creed)

Christians throughout the ages have affirmed their trust in the presence and power of God the Spirit at work in the Church and the world. This is never more evident than when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The Christian belief in the Holy Spirit is an integral part of the confession of faith that originated at the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in A.D. 381, and became known as the Creed of Nicea-Constantinople.

This year we celebrate the 1600th anniversary of this great event in the life of the universal Church. Christians all over the world will respond joyfully to the call of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to give thanks for the ongoing power of the Holy Spirit.

We express our conviction that both the content of this ancient Creed and the fellowship of this ecumenical Council have a continuing significance for our own worship and witness.

Our worship today, through our confession of the Triune God, keeps us in the footsteps of the Church of the New Testament. We worship and glorify the Holy Spirit along with the Father and the Son. It is the Person of the Holy Spirit who renews life by enlightening our minds and inspiring our hearts. The Holy Spirit is thereby essential to the divine plan of salvation. The Lord Jesus promised Christians that they would be guided into all truth "when the Spirit of truth comes" (John 16:13). Faithful witnesses were also assured, "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

The Nicene Creed, as the most widely used of all the creeds, is a foundation for Christian unity and a standard for the ecumenical movement. The Creed's doctrine of the Trinity is the major Christian affirmation of faith. In the course of Christian history, however, there has arisen controversy about the right wording of one phrase in the Creed and this has led to disunity between Christians in the Eastern and Western traditions of the Church.

We thankfully acknowledge that through the life-giving work of the Spirit, there are now growing theological convergences in our ecumenical efforts to reconcile Christian communions. We are hopeful that these convergences will enable us to confess the apostolic faith with one voice, thereby fulfilling our common calling to manifest the unity of Christ's Church more visibly.

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The Second Ecumenical Council is not just an historical event; it also serves as a source of inspiration for Christians today. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this Council was able to reconcile ambiguities and conflicts, and witness to the truth of the Gospel while firmly rejecting error. The presence and witness of the Holy Spirit, in fulfilment of Christ's prayer, consecrated Christians into a conciliar fellowship: "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

Building on this firm foundation, we express our own determination to grow into a full fellowship that is not just a Utopian dream. Our common witness already anticipates the fuller realization of our unity in Christ. The more Christians can grow together into such a fellowship, the more hope they will give to a dangerously divided world. At the same time, the Spirit empowers Christians to witness directly to the truth of the Gospel, in the world in struggles against poverty, injustice and oppression.

On this day of Pentecost, we call on the life-giving Holy Spirit to enable us to confess the apostolic faith more convincingly as a witnessing fellowship of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church that lives in and for the world.

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The Presidents of the World Council of Churches :

Hon. President : Rev. Dr W.A. Visser't Hooft, Geneva, Switzerland  
His Holiness Ilia II, Catholicos and Patriarch of All Georgia, Georgian SSR.  
The Honourable Mrs Justice A.R. Jiaage, Accra, Ghana  
Prof. José Miguez-Bonino, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Dr T.B. Simatupang, Jakarta-Pusat, Indonesia  
Archbishop Olof Sundby, Uppsala, Sweden  
Dr Cynthia Wedel, Alexandria, Va. USA.

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APPENDIX: This is the text of the Creed of Nicea-Constantinople (A.D. 381) in its original wording:

"We believe in one God, the Father All Governing, creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all time, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not created, of the same essence as the Father, through Whom all things came into being, Who for us men and because of our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day, according to the

(more)

Scriptures, and ascended to heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father, and will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His Kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and life-giver, Who proceeds from the Father, Who is worshipped and glorified together with the Father and Son. Who spoke through the prophets; and in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. We confess one baptism for the remission of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen."

(John H. Leith (ed.), Creeds of the Churches, Doubleday, New York, 1963, p.33)

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#### WCC ISSUES HALF MILLION DOLLAR APPEAL FOR POLAND

Geneva (EPS) - An appeal for US\$ 500,000 has been launched by the World Council of Churches (WCC) to provide food and other material aid to Poland.

Following visits and consultations with churches in Poland the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) has made a new assessment of the serious food shortage in the country which, it says, "indicates the need for supplementary material aid".

Between December 1980 and January 1981 CICARWS was instrumental in sending six trucks of goods into Poland destined for both church and state institutions.

The Ecumenical Council of Poland has now provided a list of needs in church institutions (old people's homes, homes for disabled persons, theological seminaries) and in summer camps and courses important for the life of the Polish churches. They also indicate that unless help is received their summer activities cannot be carried through.

Although the importation of goods will take place in close understanding and cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the previous agreement whereby 2/5 of shipments went to state institutions has been suspended. This means that CICARWS can provide the churches in Poland with whatever commodities are needed and available.

As it is estimated that the situation in Poland is unlikely to return to normal for some time it is proposed to work on a six-month basis for delivery of goods, while constantly monitoring the situation.





# Ecumenical Press Service

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LEBANON AND CENTRAL AMERICA CONCERN  
WCC's INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Friedewald, FRG (EPS) - Concern at the situation in Lebanon and alarm at the deterioration of conditions in Central America were two issues highlighted at the recent meeting of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission of the Churches on International Affairs (CCIA), held here 11-15 May.

At this, the last meeting of the present Commission before the 1983 WCC Assembly, much time was taken up on discussions on major concerns for the agenda at the Assembly. These revolve around two main issues - militarism and the arms race, and human rights concerns.

But it was the present day situation in many different parts of the world which called forth more detailed comment, discussion and statements.

On Lebanon (see statement page 4) the Commission expressed its concern at the violent sequence of events in that country and at the "death, pain, anguish and ruin" that has resulted.

The Commission's statement reiterates that it believes that the conflict is essentially political "despite the religious overtones, motivations and implications" which stem from the "confessional structures of Lebanese and Middle Eastern societies".

On Central America (see statement page 7) the Commission mentions especially the "intensifying conflict in El Salvador", the threats to the "new, more just society" in Nicaragua, the "thousands of murders" in Guatemala, and the use of parts of Honduras and the United States as "training ground for mercenaries".

The statement views the Central American situation as posing "a serious threat to peace in the whole region" and yet in the midst of all this sees "reason to give thanks for God's strengthening of the church" in the region.

"The firm faith, courage, and concrete witness which has lead hundreds of Christian samaritans to martyrdom humbles and strenthens us in our resolve to support them in all ways we have available", says the statement.

The Commission also looked forward to the next meeting of the WCC's Central Committee scheduled for August this year in Dresden, GDR. Guidelines were commended for a possible statement on Europe which would recognize the "urgency of detente as an issue of survival".

Guidelines on Namibia and on Indo-China were also discussed and these suggestions will be forwarded to the Central Committee meeting.

The Commission took the opportunity of thanking Mr Leopoldo Niilus, for his period of 12 years as director of the Commission and welcomed Mr Ninan Koshy, Executive Secretary of the Commission, as the new director.



(This story was first issued as a Press Release on Tuesday, 19 May)

URGENT APPEAL FOR PEACE IN LEBANON  
AND MIDDLE EAST FROM WCC

Geneva (EPS) - The Rev. Dr. Philip A. Potter, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC), today issued the following statement :

Having heard the urgent appeals coming from Lebanese leaders, both Christian and Muslim, and deeply concerned about the threat of increasing conflicts and suffering for people in Lebanon and the Middle East region, I make this appeal in the name of Jesus Christ, whose Gospel is a message of peace.

As General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, I strongly affirm and commend the statement on Lebanon adopted last week by the WCC's Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. This statement (text attached) helps to underline and call to the attention of international public opinion three basic facts about the conflict which must not be obscured:

1. Lebanese sovereignty: Lebanon is and should remain a sovereign country. There have been significant initiatives in the country towards more understanding between the different communities and parties involved. Lebanon should not be considered as a problem, but as a promise, recovering its earlier role of becoming a model of how different cultures, religions and peoples can live together in justice and peace. Everything should be done to strengthen the Lebanese government in its efforts to re-establish and defend the full sovereignty of the country. Lebanon must not be sacrificed to wider regional and international interests.
  2. Legitimate security interests: All countries in the region have legitimate security interests. This is valid in particular for Israel and Syria. Security cannot be defined, however, at the cost of the integrity of a neighbour country like Lebanon. The essential issue for regional security is the lack of acknowledgement by Israel of the rights of the Palestinian people. No lasting security and peace can be established in the region, especially among Israel, Lebanon and Syria, without the determination to solve the Palestinian problem.
  3. No solution without negotiation: The Middle East conflict has become a concern for the international community. Various peace initiatives have been launched, without leading to tangible results. There is a temptation to consider a limited military confrontation as an unavoidable step in the effort to bring the parties concerned to the negotiating table. In such a situation it is necessary to
- denounce as cynical and highly dangerous for world peace at large, particularly in the present crisis, any consideration that a "limited war" could advance the efforts to find a solution to the conflict;

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- urge that the partial peace initiative should be broadened to lead to a general international conference involving all parties concerned in the region, including also the USA, USSR, EEC, and in particular the Palestinian people through their legitimate representatives.

The proper place for such a round-table conference could be the Lebanon, as this would in turn serve as an added stimulus to Lebanese reconciliation and sovereignty, which would save this country from more suffering and destruction.

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### S T A T E M E N T   O N   L E B A N O N

Adopted by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches, at its 35th Meeting convened at Friedewald, FRG, 11-15 May, 1981 :

Disturbed and deeply concerned with the violent sequence of events that has again caused so much death, pain, anguish and ruin in Lebanon;

Moved with deep compassion and sympathy for the people of Lebanon because of this new escalation of violence;

Recognizing that Lebanon is ever more becoming a battlefield for settling regional and possibly even wider international differences thus becoming the concern of the international community;

Moved by the appeal of the patriarchs, bishops, and leaders of the Christian Communities in Lebanon (11 April 1981) to the peoples of the world "to help bring an end to our tragedy";

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs :

Reiterates the appeal of the World Council of Churches Executive Committee (May 1976) to the people and all parties involved in Lebanon to renounce violence and to spare human lives through a renewed commitment to finding negotiated solutions;

Reaffirms its belief that the conflict continues to be essentially a political one despite the religious overtones, motivations and implications stemming from the confessional structures of Lebanese and Middle Eastern societies;

Affirms that Lebanon should not be sacrificed in the process of enabling the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights or in settling the Arab-Israeli conflict;

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Believes that recovery of Lebanese unity and territorial integrity are key to the solution of the Lebanese problem and supports all efforts to strengthen the Government of Lebanon as it attempts to reassert the effective exercise of its sovereignty over all Lebanese territory;

Calls for:

- the termination of Israeli attacks and interventions against Lebanon and Palestinians in South Lebanon which Israel claims is necessary for its security and a help to Lebanon; because the security of both Israel and Lebanon depends upon Israeli recognition of Palestinian self-determination and the establishment of a just peace with the Palestinians and the Arab countries in general;
- new peace initiatives by the Arab League and the United Nations which would lead to national unity and other conditions in Lebanon making the presence of the Syrian army as the Arab deterring force unnecessary;
- an important United Nations role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation that will be necessary following the conflict;

Prayerfully supports Christians and Muslims in Lebanon as they seek to restore the harmonious community life which has traditionally characterized their country and work together for a united Lebanon devoted to the defence of justice, development and peace in the Middle East; and

Expresses appreciation to the member churches of the WCC for their responses in the past and reiterates the Executive Committee (May 1976) appeal to the churches to provide humanitarian aid and assistance through the WCC "to bring relief to the victims of this conflict, regardless of their religious, ethnic or political affiliation".

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HALF-MILLION DOLLARS REQUESTED  
FOR MIDDLE EAST RELIEF

Geneva (EPS) - An emergency appeal for US\$ 500,000 has been issued by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) to aid relief work in the Lebanon and reconstruction in the Christian village of Kfar Yasif, in Israel.

The situation in Lebanon remains critical and extremely sensitive and the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) assesses that a serious deterioration could occur at any time. (See story and statement this issue).

In this light CICARWS has issued an interim appeal for \$ 250,000 in order to be able to respond quickly to requests if and when the need arises. This appeal follows a gift of \$ 25,000 sent to the MECC for relief, such as the local purchases of food and blankets during the Zahle crisis.

The \$ 250,000 appeal for Kfar Yasif follows an attack on the village on 14 April. Druze people from the north Galilee village of Julis attacked the mainly Christian western Galilean village of Kfar Yasif. By the time the police arrived three persons had been killed and 10 injured, including some seriously. In addition, damage had been caused to 83 houses, 29 cars, six stores, one pharmacy, a school, and a church had been looted and set on fire.

Following the incident the Christian leadership in Galilee appealed to the MECC and the WCC for moral and financial support.

EPS

NEW GENERAL SECRETARY  
FOR PACIFIC CHURCH COUNCIL

Tonga, Pac.(EPS) - The Rev. Baiteka Nabetari, 36, has been elected General Secretary of the Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) meeting at its Assembly here. Mr Nabetari replaces Mrs Lorine Tevi, a Fijian Methodist.

Other appointments made at the PCC's fourth assembly include the reelection of Bishop Jabez Bryce as chairman and of Mr Alfred Jack as Treasurer.

Mr Nabetari has been the Principal of the Tangintebu Theological College in Tarawa Kiribati since 1975 and is also deputy moderator of the Kiribatu Protestant Church. He also participated in the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey in 1977/78.

EPS



STATEMENT ON CENTRAL AMERICA

The Christian community of Latin America is stupefied by the deterioration of the political, economic and social situation of El Salvador. We are alarmed that crime, persecution, disappearance and other violations of human rights have not been contained; rather repression continues with impunity and has worsened. Many Christian leaders have been persecuted and assassinated. Peasants have fled zones of conflict in great number ... food and medicine are in acutely short supply. The wounded are brought to hospitals and clinics only to be viciously executed by paramilitary groups. Abject poverty grows alongside walled colonies of opulence ...

Statement of the Latin American Council  
of Churches in Formation (CLAI),  
Santiago de Chile, 13 December 1980.

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches (WCC), meeting in Friedewald, FRG, 11-15 May 1981, shares the stupefaction and alarm of Christians throughout Latin America and the whole world at the continuing, intensifying conflict in El Salvador. The WCC has protested against this gross injustice, issued urgent appeals to those who callously aid and support the forces of repression, and has sought to support Christians and their churches in their courageous efforts to minister to the poor, the persecuted, the homeless and the sick in body and soul. The WCC has brought the plight of the people of this and other Central American nations to the attention of the United Nations along with appeals for international action to bring a halt to what can now only be described as a massacre.

Central America has become a battlefield, the site of a genocidal war against the people. It is a war waged by governments by their armies and paramilitary groups who act with impunity against the poor. It is a war fought not only with the sophisticated instruments of modern warfare, but also by means of torture, mass extermination and institutionalized terror. It is a war whose victims are wives and children as often as husbands and fathers. And it has now become very much a war against the Church and the Gospel, whose primary targets are bishops, priests and pastors, catechists and lay preachers. The Bible itself is considered a threat and is being removed from peasant communities, especially in Guatemala, by the "forces of order".

The cause of this war, which has been going on for decades, is not subversion, either from within or without. It is the product of the disintegration of the political, economic and social system of these countries which has ignored the interests and rights of the poor and exploited their bodies and their land to the benefit of the very few.

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The privileged few have traditionally been allied with the United States, which to protect them and its own perceived interests has intervened either openly or by covert action in this area since these countries gained their independence early in the 19th century. Again today, that foreign power is present and threatens to intervene in still more massive ways. Costa Rica, traditional haven of democracy and social well-being in Central America, is not immune. Nicaragua, where through great sacrifice the people rid themselves of a brutal, 40 year-long dictatorship, and are engaged in the construction of a new, more just society, is threatened. The Guatemalan Government, demonstrably and directly responsible for thousands of murders is now being considered for renewed military assistance. Honduras, like parts of the United States itself, is used as a training ground for mercenaries, many of whom are former members of Somoza's National Guard.

The situation in Central America itself poses a serious threat to peace in the whole region, and there are now clear indications that a number of countries in the Caribbean as well are included in what appear to be wide-spread intervention plans.

Yet in the midst of the sorrow we feel at this situation, we have reason to give thanks for God's strengthening of the Church in Central America. "The firm faith, courage, and concrete witness which has lead hundreds of Christian samaritans to martyrdom humbles and strengthens us in our resolve to support them in all ways we have available". With a deep sense of solidarity in our One Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we call upon the churches once again to :

1. Join together throughout the ecumenical fellowship in continuing prayer for our brothers and sisters throughout Central America, and especially in El Salvador and Guatemala, giving thanks for their witness, and asking God's mercy upon them;
2. Redouble their efforts to come to the aid of the victims of this conflict;
3. Renew their efforts, in all ways available to them, to cause the governments of El Salvador and Guatemala to cease their repressive activities, and the government of the United States to desist from all direct or covert, present or planned intervention in the countries of Central America and the Caribbean;
4. Resist and seek to eliminate the systematic defamatory campaigns of "dis-information" distorting the truth about the reality of Central America, the plight of its people, and the witness of its church and those in solidarity with them.

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(The following was first issued on 14 May)

WORLD COUNCIL REACTS TO ASSASSINATION  
ATTEMPT ON POPE

Geneva (EPS) - Within an hour after the attempt on the Pope's life, the World Council of Churches (WCC) sent the following telegram to Cardinal Casaroli, Secretariat of State/Vatican :

"We are deeply grieved to hear of the shocking attempt on the life of His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

"Our intercessions join with those of the whole Christian family that God, in his infinite mercy, will through the care of human hands, bring him back to health and that he will be able to continue his universal ministry of love and peace. In Jesus Christ our Redeemer."

Philip Potter  
General Secretary

\*The day after the attempt on the Pope's life, his official visit to Switzerland, planned from 31 May to 5 June, was postponed. His Holiness Pope John Paul II, intended to visit the World Council of Churches (WCC) on 5 June.

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WORLD COUNCIL TO RECEIVE OFFICIAL VISIT OF  
GDR STATE SECRETARY FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Geneva (EPS) - The State Secretary for Religious Affairs of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Klaus Gysi, will make an official visit to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, 25-29 May. He will be the guest of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), who all have their headquarters in the Centre.

Mr Gysi will be spending one day with each of the first three organizations and will also meet a representative of the WARC. His first meeting will be with the Rev. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the WCC.

The invitation was originally extended to Mr Gysi's predecessor, Hans Seigewasser in 1978, but due to his ill health this visit never came about. However, soon after Mr Gysi was appointed, he accepted the invitation. The State Secretary will be accompanied by Mr Hans Weise, who, since 1957, has been in charge of international relations within the State Secretariat for Religious Affairs.

In recent years several State Secretaries for Religious Affairs from European socialist countries have paid official visits to the Ecumenical Centre.

BRITISH CHURCH COUNCIL  
APPOINTS NEW STAFF

London (EPS) - Canon Paul Oestreicher and Mr Keith P. Jenkins have been appointed to the staff of the British Council of Churches (BCC).

Canon Oestreicher (50) will take up his appointment as Assistant General Secretary and Secretary of the Division of International Affairs of the BCC from 1 September. He succeeds the Rev. Brian Duckworth, who becomes the Development and International Affairs Secretary in the Division of Social Responsibility of the Methodist Church.

Canon Oestreicher, has been Vicar of the Parish of the Ascension, Blackheath, London, since 1968. He served as Associate Secretary of the BCC's International Affairs Department from 1964-69. He was chairman of the British Section of Amnesty International 1974-79.

Mr Jenkins (39) is the new Executive Secretary in the Division of Community Affairs, with special responsibility for the Community and Race Relations Unit. He succeeds the Rev. Elliott Kendall who retires at the end of August.

Mr Jenkins, a Methodist local preacher, is a lawyer at present with the London Borough of Harrow as Principal Assistant Controller of the Law and Administration Department.

EPS

NEW ZEALAND CHURCH COUNCIL  
ELECTS FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT

Wellington, NZ (EPS) - Joan Anderson, 60, has been elected the first woman president of the National Christian Council of New Zealand (NCCNZ).

Mrs Anderson is also the first lay person to be chosen to head the NCCNZ in its 40-year history.

In 1978, Mrs Anderson was the first elected woman moderator of the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand.

EPS





# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 4 JUNE 1981

RESETTLEMENT, THEOLOGY AND CHURCH ADVOCACY  
FOR REFUGEES DISCUSSED IN US

Geneva (EPS) - Issues of resettlement, advocacy and communication and theology related to refugees were among the major concerns of an international consultation held at Stony Point, New York, 8-11 May.

Held under the auspices of the refugee section of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) as a result of joint planning with Church World Service, the aid arm of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, and the Canadian Council of Churches, this consultation brought together 44 delegates from 23 countries all of whom are working on refugee policy concerns related to refugee resettlement and integration. The moderator of the consultation was Mr George Cram, Secretary of the Primate's World Development and Relief Office of the Anglican Church in Canada. The meeting provided a forum for the sharing of experiences and a meeting place from where strategies for promoting just treatment for refugees seeking resettlement could be formulated.

The consultation grew out of a mutually felt need by church persons involved in refugee work around the world to talk with each about resettlement needs.

This concerned, involved and knowledgeable group formulated a number of recommendations to member churches that they:

- pursue the theological reflection process of their work with refugees;
- work to prevent the growth of refugee situations by addressing the root causes which often involve the struggles of the oppressed in the world for justice;
- strengthen the worldwide information and advocacy network to enable churches to speak out more clearly on refugee matters;
- accept a definition of refugees which includes victims of "systematic" economic deprivation;
- urge their respective government to continue granting asylum liberally for refugees;
- ensure the just treatment of refugees and respect for their culture and values in the integration process;
- support the idea of an international refugee advisory group to the WCC Refugee Service office.

In an address to the consultation the coordinator of the WCC's refugee service, Ms Ruud van Hoogevest reminded the consultation that the majority of refugees were from the "Third World" and the majority of resettlement was in the "first".

She also called participants attention to the fact that the distinction between "economic" and "political" refugees is increasingly hard to draw.

(more)



"How should churches respond to all this?" she asked. Drawing on the experience of the WCC she said that settlement and integration issues cannot merely be tackled by compassionate action but require addressing the root causes which go hand-in-hand with peace, justice, solidarity and respect for human rights. Besides working with resettlement, as in the past, church persons concerned with helping refugees should involve themselves in discussion and action on development, combating racism, migration issues and dialogue with people of other faiths.

A second speaker was Mr Alan Matheson, then secretary for migration at the WCC. He challenged the Consultation to move beyond platitudes and generalities of refugee resettlement into taking a hard and honest look at the broader context of the society into which the refugee moves - in particular at the present economic and racial situations facing receiving societies.

In looking at the economic realities of the Western industrialized receiving countries, Mr Matheson concluded that the era of full employment and economic expansion of the 1950's and 60's is now ended. Western Europe and North America are facing both inflation and unemployment along with cuts in public budgets for social welfare benefits.

The implications for refugees and migrants are: 1) restrictive border policies regarding admissions of "foreigners", 2) increasingly blatant "refoulement" or forcible return of refugees to their homeland against their wishes; 3) increasing anxiety of host countries to "foreigners" in their midst; 4) increasing probability of the manipulation and exploitation of unorganized refugees and migrants; and 5) a significant gap between government policies and refugee needs.

In short, many refugees are being taken advantage of and in fact exploited in a period of economic uncertainty. The challenge for the churches is how to ensure: 1) just work opportunities for refugees; 2) that refugees are not employed at the expense of other oppressed and exploited groups; 3) justice and protection in industries ever ready to exploit and manipulate; and 4) continued and generous ministry to refugees when general economic and political forces are increasingly hesitant to receive increased numbers.

As a result of the working group discussions four main areas of concern emerged for further church involvement in the refugee situation. Firstly, the need to try to assess and then deal with the root causes of the refugee problem. This report recalled that what we have now come to term "human rights" is at the very root of the problem.

Secondly, the churches role in advocacy and information concerns was emphasized. Here it was stressed that part of the churches mission was to persuade government to adopt policies in keeping with the church's vision of the world.

Another of the working groups discussed in a specific way the theological understanding of work for refugees. The key phrase in their report on the response to people who have been uprooted is "from oppression to promise;

(more)

journeying together", which, said the group, means "we courageously name the powers that tyrannize millions of people".

The fourth concern was specifically on asylum, settlement and resettlement. Here churches were urged to act locally, nationally and internationally in order to secure conditions more conducive towards treatment based upon human dignity, than is the case at the present time.

EPS

#### BLACK CHURCH TO BECOME CEC MEMBER

Marseille (EPS) - The Conference of European Churches (CEC), has accepted into its 114 church membership its first black church, the Shiloh United Church of Christ Apostolic Worldwide. The decision to accept this Church and the Baptist Union of Czechoslovakia was approved by the CEC Pfcidium and Consultative Committee during their annual meeting, 6-8 May, in Carry-le-Rouet, near Marseille France.

The Shiloh United Church is made up of a majority of Christians from the Caribbean, now living permanently in Great Britain. The Church is also a member of the British Council of Churches.

The CEC is a continental ecclesiastical organization headquartered in Geneva. It unites Churches of all confessions, except the Roman Catholic Church, from the Atlantic to the Urals.

EPS

#### PETER STOREY - NEW PRESIDENT OF SACC

Johannesburg (EPS) - Methodist Minister, the Rev. Peter Storey, was elected President of the South African Council of Churches (SACC) during its annual meeting in Johannesburg at the beginning of May. Mr Storey succeeds the Rev. Sam Buti as head of the SACC, which groups together some 15 million Christians, both black and white.

Bishop Desmond Tutu, who, during the assembly strongly objected to the forced deportation of the black population, will continue as the SACC's General Secretary. Mr Storey who has been the Vice-President of the SACC, will be replaced by Sally Motlana and Simon Gubule.

After his election, Mr Storey said that at this time the SACC was the only place in South Africa where black and white people are able to collaborate and constitute a "seismograph" of the country's situation. The new SACC President also said that he considers it more important than ever to work for justice, peace and reconciliation in South Africa.

EPS



MISSION AND EVANGELISM COMMISSION  
ASSESSES PRESENT ROLE

Bucharest (EPS) - An "ecumenical affirmation" on mission and evangelization today, a series of biblical reflections on the theme of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) VIth Assembly, and a programme which will allow the Orthodox churches to participate more actively in mission dialogue: these were the major results of a meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) which took place 5-11 May 1981, in Bucharest. Host for the occasion was the Rumanian Orthodox Church.

This was the first time that the Commission had met in an Orthodox country and was also the last meeting before the Assembly planned for 1983 in Vancouver, Canada. During their stay the some 60 Commission members and advisors from 34 countries participated in the first ecumenical celebration ever organized in Rumania to include local believers from the Orthodox, Armenian, Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican and Baptist traditions.

In an important document of 12 pages, the CWME made an assessment of the 20 years of their participation in the WCC (this was brought about in 1961 by the integration of the International Missionary Council into the WCC) and presented "the common convictions concerning our missionary and evangelistic vocation". The document clearly reaffirms that the objective of witness and evangelization is and remains conversion and baptism and the good news of the kingdom. This always represents a challenge directed at the structures of society and an appeal to repentance addressed to each individual. The CWME affirms, in addition, that despite the ambiguities of the contemporary missionary movement "the Church is implanted in practically every country of the world", but, the Commission says, "this task must be pursued until there exists, in every human community, a cell of the Kingdom, a community which confess Jesus Christ and, in his name, is at the service of his people."

The document rejects the crusade spirit which it says, is contrary to the example given by Jesus Christ. The CWME believes that while Christians remain free to choose the ways in which they announce the Gospel in their various contexts, they must be aware that no way is ever neutral: "they betray or illustrate the Gospel we announce." In addition, they should be on guard against those who believe that the Gospel is a product, which is sold by means of publicity and marketing techniques. "Evangelization is done by interpersonal relationships where the Holy Spirit gives birth to the faith" they say.

In conclusion: "We have discovered in our ecumenical experience the reality of a profound unity in the fundamental affirmation of our Christian faith. In solidarity one with another the churches have helped one another in their witness before the world ... and they have united their forces, spiritual and material, to announce clearly their vocation and their common hope". The document will be presented in August to the next meeting of the WCC's Central Committee.

A large part of the Bucharest meeting was given over to Bible study and a reflection on the missiological aspects of the Assembly theme: "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World". The texts of the studies will appear in

(more)

a forthcoming issue of The International Review of Mission, the quarterly publication of CWME. In addition, the Orthodox consultative group of the CWME focussed on a detailed programme designed to motivate the Orthodox Churches who are members of the WCC to deepen their reflection on the apostolic vocation of the Church and for them to support concrete missionary actions in their efforts.

EPS

HEALTH CARE FOR ALL -  
THEME OF CMC MEETING

Denpasa, Bali (EPS) - Generalized community health care, basic drugs available for all and an active participation of the population in health care efforts in all countries, but above all in developing countries, have been the main points discussed at the recent annual meeting of the Christian Medical Commission (CMC) of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Before some 30 members and advisors, meeting 3-8 May, in Denpasar, Bali, CMC Director, Dr Stuart Kingma, pleaded for a community approach to the problems of health care and for an active presence of the churches in this area "otherwise we risk being confronted by the year 2000 with unsurmountable health problems".

For the CMC, fighting and preventing illness is not the problem of specialists only. It is also a case of people "taking it into their own hands", said Dr Kingma, in the communities to which they belong for them "to assume responsibility for their health in a participatory way", in place of submitting painfully to an illness where preventive medicine or early diagnosis of illness is still imperfect.

CMC has launched an ambitious study in all continents in order to stimulate the churches to rethink their medical approach in relation to their actual needs. This study on "the Christian understanding of health, healing and wholeness of the person" was made the object of a regional meeting of church delegates and doctors from South-East Asia, some days before the Commission meeting opened in Bali. From now until the WCC Assembly in Vancouver in 1983, the CMC will prepare a substantial document bringing together the conclusions from the eight regional meetings which will by that time have considered this study.

EPS



CLOSER LINKS PROMISED  
BETWEEN LWF AND WCC

Geneva (EPS/LWF) - The most comprehensive review yet undertaken of relationships between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has produced a clear statement of the differences between the two organizations and a call for "more systematic and disciplined process of consultation between them".

The call forms part of a seven page report from the WCC/LWF international consultation held at Bossey, near Geneva, 11-15 May, and attended by elected officers and senior staff of the two organizations.

Even though LWF and WCC share a common building in Geneva, represent overlapping church memberships and have worked together for over 30 years, the Bossey consultation was the first such meeting at this level.

It resulted in an open and constructive encounter that identified at least, the points of disagreement and the possibilities for closer cooperation.

The consultation endorsed a statement of guiding principles that affirm the "WCC and LWF are different in kind and have legitimately different functions". Nevertheless, says the report, "their ecumenical efforts should be complementary", the WCC acting as a "special instrument of the ecumenical movement" and a "preliminary expression of that unity which is God's will and gift for which Christians pray and work"; the LWF acting as "an instrument and expression of a distinctive fellowship of churches" assisting its members and fostering "Lutheran interest in concern for and participation in the ecumenical movement".

Both LWF and WCC affirm that "it is the goal of the ecumenical movement to serve the cause of the visible unity of the church" and see that movement as one that goes beyond any of its structural expressions.

A second section of the report, listing areas for more extensive cooperation, begins with a call for a study on the nature of the World Council of Churches and its role in the ecumenical movement, evidence that the principles agreed on in the first section are only "guiding" and await more substantial development. Greater LWF involvement is encouraged in producing the WCC's Faith and Order Commission texts on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry and the Study on Confessing the Apostolic Faith Today. This involvement would include recognition of the results of bilateral conversations between LWF and other Christian World Communions.

Intensified cooperation is also urged on issues affecting women in church and society, a range of educational programmes, inter-faith dialogue and ongoing studies on political issues, war and peace, power and violence.

Subsequent sections of the report examine working relationships between LWF and WCC in areas of mission and service and call for intensive consultation on the mandates, goals and convictions of the respective programme units. Special attention is requested for the promotion of local ecumenism and the respect for local church initiative and participation in WCC/LWF activities. The danger of proselytism among Christians which might develop through mission and service activities is also noted, as is the need for new models of ecumenical cooperation.

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A final section of the report deals with communication, an area in which the relevant departments of both organizations have a clear ecumenical mandate and despite structural differences, a record of steadily increasing cooperation in radio work and communication research. Further sharing of resources, correspondents and staff was urged, especially in the field of news services, and a pattern of even wider ecumenical consultation and planning was endorsed. This would include not only existing partners like the World Association for Christian Communication but other Church related agencies, including Roman Catholic bodies.

The whole report from the Bossey consultation will be considered by the LWF Executive Committee, and the WCC Central Committee, both in August this year. Implementation would take place not only at the level of headquarters staff and programmes but also between the churches and other partners of the two organizations. Another high level follow-up meeting is proposed for 1985, after the LWF and WCC Assemblies.

EPS

GDR PROTESTANTS SEND  
40,000 BIBLES TO VIETNAM

Berlin, GDR (EPS) - The Federation of Protestant Churches in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) has said during a meeting in May, that the Protestant Churches of the GDR had sent 40,000 Bibles and New Testaments to the Protestant Church in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese version of the scriptures was despatched in collaboration with the Gustav Adolf Werk and the European Bible Society. This was in response to a desire expressed by a delegation of the Vietnamese Churches visiting the GDR in 1980. In acknowledging receipt of the Bibles, the Vietnamese Church representatives repeated an invitation extended to the Federation of Protestant Churches to send, this year, a delegation to Vietnam.

EPS



BRITAIN STILL SUPPLYING ARMS  
TO SOUTH AFRICA SAYS REPORT

London (EPS) - Britain's role in enabling South Africa to equip itself with modern weapons and military technology has been analysed by Christian Concern for Southern Africa (CCSA), an inter-denominational organization with support from all the major churches in Britain, in a report "Arms for Apartheid" published Friday, 22 May.

The report concluded: "First, South Africa has now become a military state, efficiently equipped with the weapons and technology required to deal with the enemy within and without. Second, Britain, through government and business, has been one of the chief enablers in this process."

Earlier the report showed how British government regulations intended to implement successive United Nations calls for an embargo on the sale of arms to South Africa, concluding with the mandatory embargo of 1977, contained such loopholes as no effective control over shipments to South Africa via intermediary countries and failed to cover such "grey areas" as electronic equipment and computers.

The reasons for this situation were, the report suggested: "British economic investment in South Africa is considerable, and therefore stability is to be maintained for as long as possible, and at whatever cost, even the cost of a long, damaging and bitter guerrilla war such as has been fought over the last decade in Zimbabwe."

The report recommended that the British government should tighten up its control of the export of arms to South Africa. This should be extended to cover "all technology, equipment or spares with military and police application, including electronics and communication equipment, aircraft, and four-wheel drive vehicles". There should also be a clamp-down on the exchange of personnel connected with such supplies.

In addition the report suggested that current licences for the manufacture in South Africa of British-designed equipment with military application should be withdrawn.

It recommended that the churches should examine their investment in companies which might be supporting the military development of South Africa and should undertake action both privately and publicly against such companies.

The report named 28 companies "which specialize in technology which is relevant to arms production and some of which have had friendly trading links with South Africa". It suggested that church shareholders might wish to question these companies about their present trade relationships with South Africa.

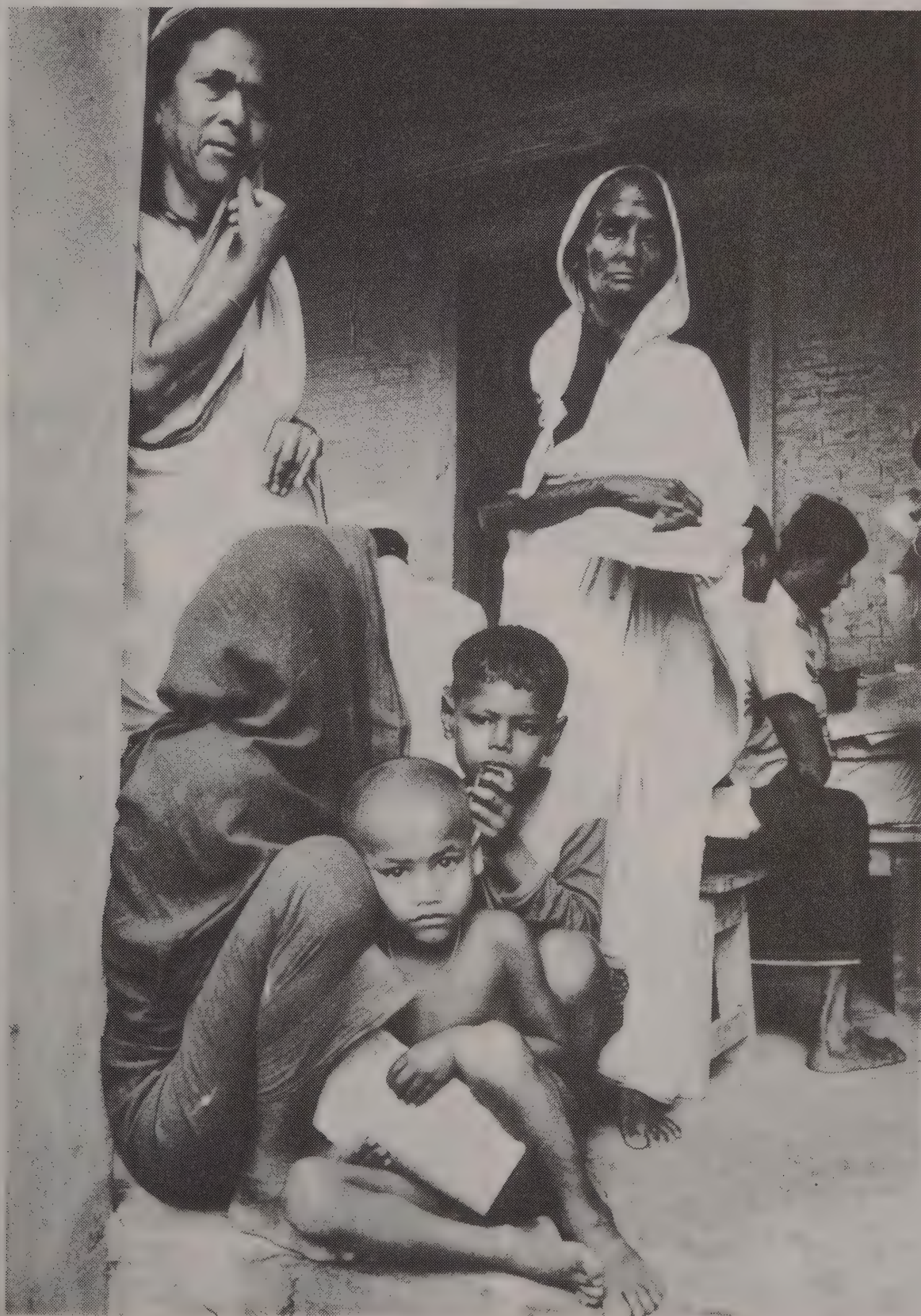
The report claimed that "many South African churchmen say privately what they cannot say publicly without facing a long prison sentence under the terrorism act - that continued Western investment, with its accompanying military support, is one of the key factors encouraging the South African government in its racialist intransigence".

It called, too, for pressure on the British government to go beyond a rigorous enforcement of the UN mandatory arms embargo towards employing "those economic pressures which may hasten the radical political and economic change which must come about in South Africa if war is to be averted".



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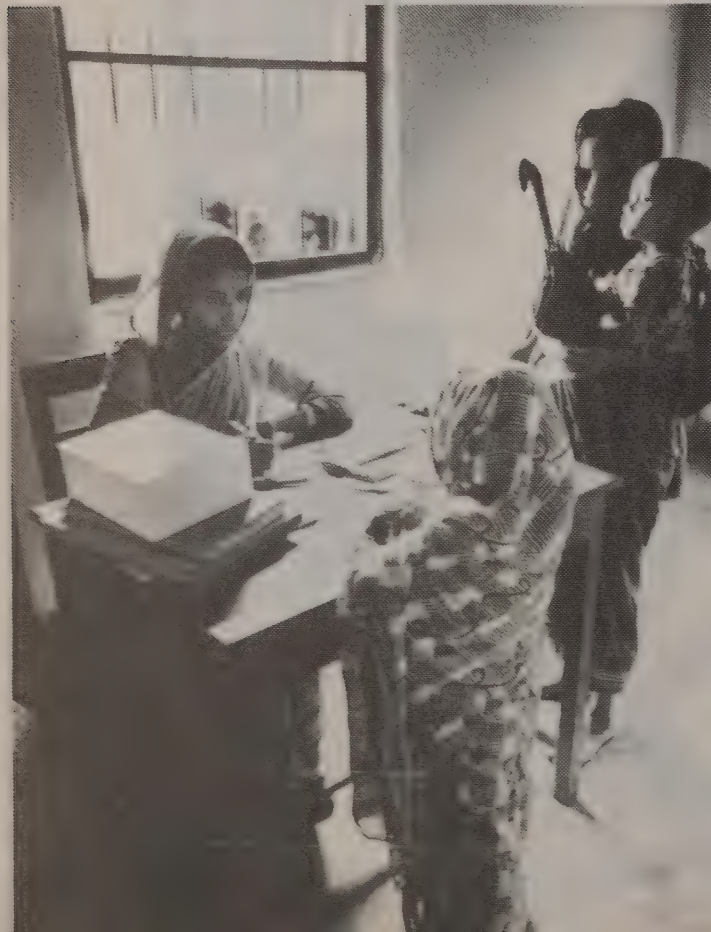


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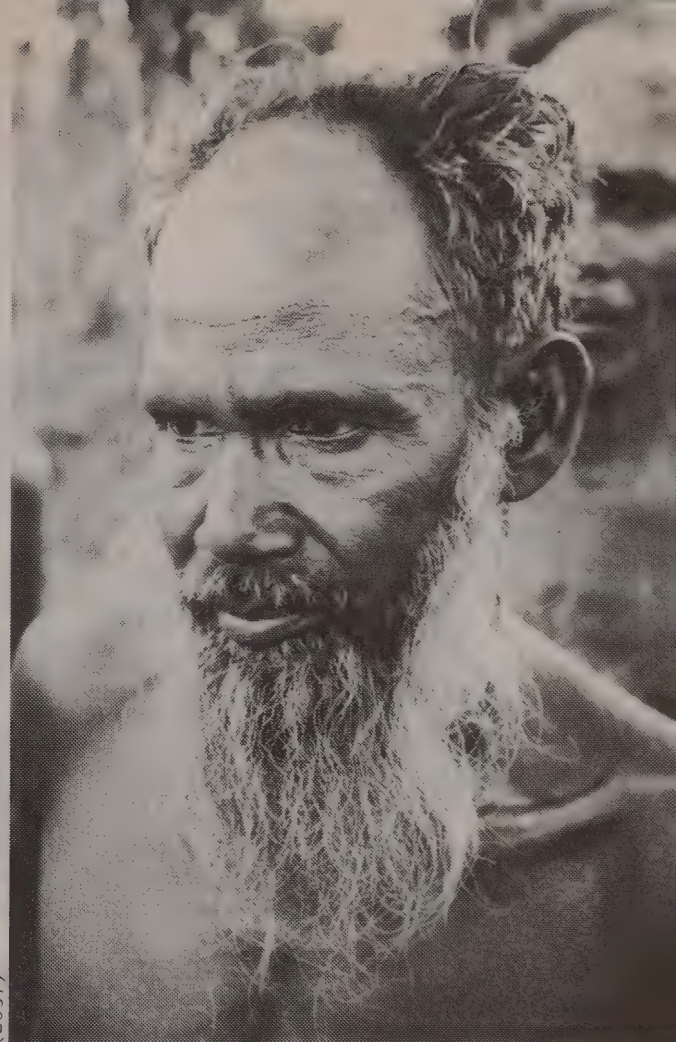
independence in 1971, Bangladesh has been faced with  
 ous problems in such areas as: industry, factories, agric-  
 re, health, housing and population. The country numbers  
 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> and expects a population of 100 million  
 en now and the year 2000. Here, we show some photographs  
 Bangladesh, where churches and agencies are working side-  
 le with the government in order to "improve" the situation.

ine, health needs and family planning are the most crucial  
 of work:

- ) A clinic in Sirajpuk ...
- ) where requests for help are many
- ) In a hospital in Gonoshasthaya Kendra
- ) Handicrafts: silk spinning in Dashchira
- ) Roadsweeping: a safe bread-winner
- ) He rolls some 5,000 cigarettes a day.
- ) Ruby, a para-medic, works in the fields
- ) before going to the clinic.
- ) One of the many landless peasants.
- ) A landowner with his farmhands.

photo: In front of a dispensary in Bangladesh.

os: Enrique Berrios/Christian Aid)



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# BRAZIL

Brazil is a land of vast natural resources and a promising future. However, at the time being many regions are hit by poverty. Churches from different countries are giving financial support to projects for the most needy.

(2627) Sorting coffee seedlings.

(2628-29) In Novo Marotinho, 80 families build their own houses with church donations.

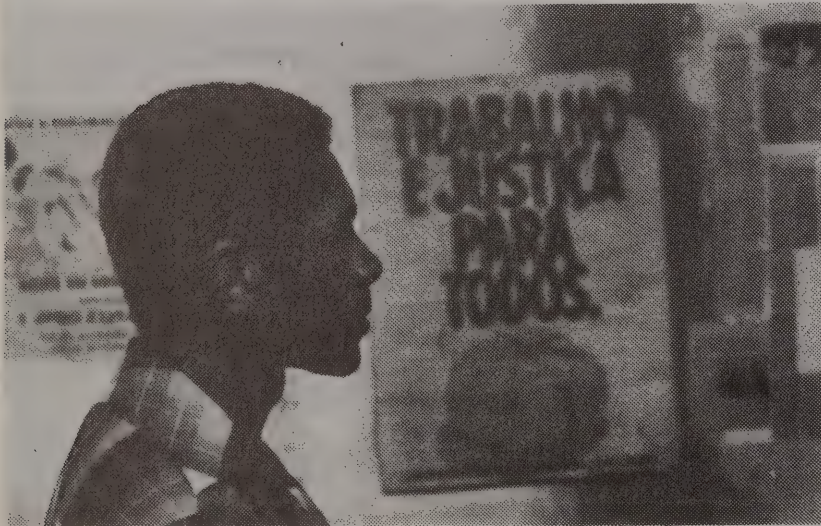
(Photos: Derrick Knight/Christian Aid/WCC)

(2625) In Nova Esperanza, the poor live and move at a risk to their lives and still remain hungry.

(2626) Andreilino Sena, with his trade union, defends the small farmers, who are driven from their land.



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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 18 JUNE 1981



US CHURCH TEAM REFUSED  
SOUTH AFRICAN VISAS

Rochester, NY, (EPS) - An ecumenical team of US church people failed in their second attempt to visit South Africa when, three hours before departure scheduled for Saturday, 16 May, the team were advised by the South African Embassy that visas would not be granted in time for the flight.

The team was sponsored by the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries as a result of an invitation from the South African Black Dutch Reformed Church. The visit was planned in order to exchange views and listen to South African church people in an effort to learn first hand the role the church is playing in the South African situation under apartheid, and also to spend time visiting US corporations, government and media representatives. The group were previously refused visas last July (1980).

In an open letter Gayraud S. Wilmore, Professor of Black Church Studies at Crozer Theological Seminary, Rochester, and a member of the team said that: "For the past fourteen months the Rochester group has been in painstaking negotiations with the South African Counsel General and the US State Department's Southern Africa desk to see that all requirements were met to make the trip possible. In order to get the balanced picture that the South African government prescribed the Americans even consented to see specific persons and agencies designated by Mr André Brink of the Counsel General's office in New York City."

"The inability of the government to grant visas, for the second time, and on the agreed upon date of departure, can only be interpreted as alarm and confusion in New York and Pretoria. There can be no question but that the government cannot demonstrate the progress it claims is taking place and has an extravagant fear of contact between certain of its church leaders and church leaders from the outside. The Rochesterians, of course, were not unaware of this paranoia, but it was a valuable lesson for the interracial group from America to go through what its friends in South Africa must experience every day," the letter said.

As a result of this experience the Rochester group has called on President Reagan to suspend the visa privilege of South African nationals until such time that Americans can travel to South Africa without harassment and undue encumbrances.

The letter continues : "Church groups in the US must not only support this demand, they must also increase contacts with and defend persons, like Bishop Tutu, who continue to struggle from within the country under the threat of imprisonment and death. It is time for American churches to launch a well-organized national campaign to boycott banks and corporations which insist upon doing business in South Africa while these conditions exist."

EPS

ORTHODOX CHURCHES EXPRESS DESIRE FOR  
MORE PARTICIPATION IN WCC

Sofia, Bulgaria (EPS) - The Orthodox Churches would like, as "one of the two great Christian traditions represented within the World Council of Churches (WCC)", that their theological viewpoint and their way of thinking be taken more into account in the future and that they be afforded a greater representation at all levels of decision making within the WCC.

This is the substance of the conclusions reached at a meeting between some 30 delegates representing the Orthodox Churches in the WCC and a delegation from the WCC staff led by the General Secretary, Dr Philip Potter.

This consultation, only the second of its type since the creation of the WCC in 1948, took place 23-31 May 1981, in Sofia, Bulgaria. Host for the occasion was the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

From the beginning, the delegates reaffirmed that their churches understood that they were both partners and full members of the WCC. Some Orthodox Churches were themselves founder members of the WCC, it was pointed out.

They described their membership of the WCC as "an expression of the concern which the Church has had since apostolic times for the life, salvation and unity of all".

In the final statement the WCC is described as "a very important ecumenical fellowship which provides for the Orthodox Churches a platform for the continuing dialogue on Christian unity, an instrument for inter-church aid and for cooperation in the work for peace and justice".

In the course of an evaluation of the Orthodox Churches participation in the WCC's activities there was criticism of the rôle given to their churches. Because of the working style of the WCC "from time to time the Orthodox Churches feel uneasy in it", they said.

At the programmatic level, the report states that the WCC does not take sufficiently into account those questions which are priorities for the Orthodox. On the contrary, issues alien to the Orthodox tradition and ethos are adopted on the council's agenda as priority issues, such as the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood.

It is above all at the level of theological declarations where delegates pleaded for a greater "transparency" for the Orthodox point of view - particularly in the doctrinal texts elaborated by the WCC. Otherwise it may be necessary to go back to the old "practice of separate texts" giving the Orthodox viewpoint, it was said.

During the Sofia meeting, described by participants as fruitful, some 20 concrete propositions were formulated calling for a greater presence and participation of the Orthodox Church in WCC affairs. These demanded, among other things, a "substantial strengthening" of the number of Orthodox delegates in all decision-making levels of the WCC: representatives on the WCC's Central Committee from all the Orthodox member churches "in proportion to their membership and historical importance"; a change in the voting procedures on theological texts where "an overwhelming majority of the churches of the reformation can easily reject a position taken by the numerically small Orthodox churches" and, finally the introduction of

(more)



Greek as an official working language of the WCC.

The Sofia consultation, in addition, considered the Orthodox participation in the preparations for the VIth Assembly of the WCC, in Vancouver in 1983. Orthodox priorities should be placed as a question for consideration by the WCC on the agenda of the Assembly, on the visitation programme to the churches during the 1982 and 1983, as well as the theological implications of the Assembly theme: "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World". The Orthodox delegates expressed their satisfaction at the initiative taken by the WCC to organize a symposium of Orthodox theologians on the theme.

The conclusions from the consultation will be presented to the next meeting of the WCC's Central Committee in Dresden in August, this year.

EPS

"MARCH TO RESCUE VIEQUES" -  
PUERTO RICANS TO TAKE TO THE STREETS

San Juan, Puerto Rico (EPS)- A "March to Rescue Vieques" involving churches, trade unions, students, political parties and many other professional and cultural organizations is to take place in Puerto Rico, 5-7 June, 1981.

Vieques, a small 72 sq.mile island off the east coast of Puerto Rico has been used by the United States Navy for target practice since 1941. Its population of 9,000 has been restricted to a quarter of the island as living space.

Protests against the systematic bombardment of the island have involved national and international bodies for many years. In 1978 a series of blunt statements and resolutions on Vieques were issued by a substantial number of churches and by the Puerto Rico Council of Churches, as well as by the Caribbean Conference of Churches and National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

One year later, Roman Catholic Bishop Antulio Parrilla Bonilla, Episcopal Priest Andres Trevathan, and Disciples of Christ Pastor Wilfredo Velez were arrested by the US Navy while holding an ecumenical service on a Vieques beach.

The organisers of the march express four demands:

- 1) the immediate cessation of all bombardment and military manoeuvres in land and waters adjacent to Vieques;
- 2) the immediate return of all lands and access to water which is presently reserved by the US Navy for bombardment and training;
- 3) a responsible indemnization by the navy to the people of Vieques in reparation for the damages to the social and economic life of the people of Vieques resulting from the navy's presence and bombing in the area;
- 4) that the US Government and Federal Agencies in Puerto Rico cease and desist from any activity designed to repress the will of the people in Vieques and of those persons actively engaged in activities designed to support said demands.

EPS

ASIAN CHURCHES SHOULD RELATE MORE  
TO PEOPLE ASSEMBLY TOLD

Bangalore (EPS) - A challenge to the churches of Asia to relate more with people and with the struggles of people was issued by Dr Yap Kim Hao in his General Secretary's report to the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) Seventh Assembly in Bangalore, India, 18-28 May 1981.

The CCA groups together nearly 100 Protestant churches and national councils of churches in 17 nations from Pakistan to Korea and Japan to New Zealand. It is headquartered in Singapore. The Assembly numbered some 350 participants.

Dr Yap, in his report, added: "We fear that in the name of spiritual renewal some of our Asian Christians are isolating themselves from people and seeing their own personal salvation.

"We want to affirm not the distinction between living in Christ and living with people but the wholeness and faithfulness of living with people in Christ and living in Christ with people," he said.

Reviewing the programmes of the CCA since the last Assembly four years ago, Dr Yap indicated how the CCA discussions leaned heavily on the term "people". "People in this context are often the despised, the oppressed and the poor", he said. He suggested the problem of human rights "haunts" CCA member churches. "The perplexing question remains - to what extent can people be sacrificed for political and economic gains", he asked.

This same theme was picked up by Mrs Chitra Fernando of Sri Lanka in the report from the Presidium. "How should Christians respond in the face of the corruptibility of human nature?" she asked.

Mrs Fernando posed this question after reflecting on the fact that "the translation of ideologies into the political and economic realities of government so often falls desperately short of the promises made". The corruptibility of human nature "causes even the well-intentioned who gain power to be seduced by the trappings of power" she said.

The report of the four CCA Presidents (Archbishop Keith Rayner of Australia, the Rev. John Nakajima of Japan, the Rev. Victor San Lone of Burma and Mrs Fernando) put forward two possible responses for Christians - to see Christianity as a competing ideology or to be content with criticising the ideologies and the powers of the world without accepting responsibility. Mrs Fernando went on to point out the inadequacies of both of these positions.

Whilst reticent about suggesting clear answers to all the needs of the world, the Presidents:

- affirmed what God has done in Christ;
- recognized that we are called not to be passive but active; and
- affirmed that "the people of God include all the people whom God has created".

"Even when we cannot find answers, we can - and we are called to - live in Christ with people" the Presidents concluded.

(more)



The Assembly took a number of administrative actions including the election of four new presidents. These are the Rev. Canon Alan Chan, an Anglican from Hong Kong, Miss Prasanna Kumari of the Church of South India, Mr Victor Oorjitham, a Methodist layman from Malaysia, and Mrs Jan Cormack, a Presbyterian lay woman from New Zealand.

Mr Moon Kyu Kang from Korea was elected Honorary Treasurer and Dr Yap Kim Hao was re-elected as the General Secretary.

EPS

#### FOOD AIRLIFT TO HELP NAMIBIAN REFUGEES IN ANGOLA

Geneva (EPS) - In a joint World Council of Churches/Lutheran World Federation programme 116 tons of food have recently been airlifted to Namibian refugees in Southern Angola.

This action is in response to an appeal for US\$ 600,000 launched in the wake of the failure of the UN sponsored talks on Namibia in January this year.

The recent shipments from Zimbabwe, where the food was purchased and the transport costs of \$ 120,000, have exhausted the remaining balance of the appeal. In a letter to related agencies and friends, the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) of the World Council of Churches (WCC) appeals for continued assistance, in order to meet the still outstanding demands.

The airlift of food followed the assurance from the area that it would be used to feed the civilian refugee population and a letter from the Angolan Council of Evangelical Churches. This letter explains the council's total involvement in the programme and the commitment of the Angolan Churches to give US\$ 22,000 as their expression of solidarity with the refugees.

The General Secretary of the Angolan Council, Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga, writes: "We note that you are organizing the sending of aid to Namibian refugees in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation. We would be extremely grateful if you could speed up this process, because our brothers and sisters are in serious distress at present due to the lack of food. From our last discussion with President Nujoma, (of the South-West Africa Peoples' Organization) we gather that the situation is growing still more serious because the number of refugees is increasing every day and they have practically nothing to eat. The shortage of maize flour is making the situation very difficult. He has also asked that all aid should be sent directly to Angola, if possible by air. It is important to note that this situation is leading to malnutrition in the refugee camps, and for this reason some special aid for the children would be extremely welcome at the present moment".

EPS

NORWAY'S PARLIAMENT WANTS  
MORE INDEPENDENT CHURCH

Oslo, (EPS) - Norway's parliament, the Storting, has approved giving the Church of Norway more independence within the state church system. Church councils on all levels will be strengthened and given more say, there will be a church assembly, and the bulk of the clergy will be appointed by the diocesan councils. Bishops and deans will remain civil servants, and be appointed by the government.

"We intend to initiate this reform work right away", the Minister for Church and Education, Mr Einar Førde, told the Storting, 25 May.

By many seen as one of the most important steps in the century old reform movement within the church, this most recent debate still turned out as something of an anti-climax. There were only scattered attempts to debate the principles of the state church system, and only a handful of the members of the Storting were present. There were no representatives of those wanting to separate church and state as soon as possible.

The explanation possibly lies in Norwegian society itself. The majority of the population wants to keep the church more or less as it is. This fact leaves the advocates of radical change as a minority, whether they argue theologically or politically. Those concentrating on the need for reforms within the present system are more easily heard.

Over the last ten years, the National Council of the Church of Norway has come to play a central part in articulating the demands for church reforms. A report last year to the Storting, and this latest report from the Storting Committee on Church and Education, to a large extent reflect the kind of church the National Council wants.

EPS

FIRST BIBLE CONGRESS TO BE HELD IN THE  
GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC IN 1982

Berlin (GDR) - In less than a year a Bible Congress will be held for the first time in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). It will have as its theme "Time for the Bible" and will be held in the Karl-Marx-Stadt, 25-28 March 1982.

Taking part will be some 200 delegates from Bible societies and groups involved in the translation, printing and distribution of the Bible.

The four day meeting will conclude with a "Bible Sunday" in which all the local parishes will be invited to attend.

EPS



BOSSEY BOARD MAKES  
NEW APPOINTMENTS

Geneva (EPS) - A Roman Catholic priest from New Zealand, an Orthodox scholar from Ethiopia, and a woman theologian from Sierra Leone were appointed as tutors at the recent meeting of the Board of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey.

Fr. Kevin O'Reilly of New Zealand will be the second Roman Catholic to be seconded from the Secretariat for Christian Unity to the Bossey staff. He will succeed Maria Teresa Porcile-Santiso, a Uruguayan who has served since October 1980. Father O'Reilly will take up his position for a 10-month term, in early October.

Dr Equale Guebre-Yohannes of Addis Ababa, who holds a PhD from Bonn, FRG, will take up his position as a tutor in the Graduate School from 1 September. Prior to his time at Bonn, Dr Yohannes studied theology and philosophy at the University of Athens. He has twice represented his Church at Assemblies of the World Council of Churches. Currently he is assisting in the re-organization of the Orthodox Seminary of the Holy Trinity in Addis Ababa. He has served as a cultural attaché in the Ethiopian Embassy to the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mrs Lloyd Fanusie has for many years been a teacher of religious studies in Sierra Leone. She is also a part-time lecturer in the Sierra Leone Theological Hall in Freetown, lecturing on African Traditional Religions. She holds degrees from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. She was a participant in the 1980 Consultation of African Women Theologians.

The Board also reviewed plans for the 1981/82 Graduate School on the theme "Created in the Image and Likeness of God".

A small booklet: "Bossey: Two Vignettes from the Early Years", has been published in connection with discussions on observing the 30th anniversary of the Graduate School in October. The booklet contains the text of a talk which Dr Willem A. Visser't Hooft has given to Bossey groups and an early memorandum which Suzanne de Dietrich wrote on the Institute and its life.

EPS

SWEDISH ARCHBISHOP SEES DISASTER FOR SOUTH  
AFRICA WITHOUT RADICAL CHANGE

Stockholm (EPS) - Radical changes for the black majority in South Africa have to come about soon, otherwise the country is heading for disaster. This was the conclusion of Sweden's Archbishop Dr Olof Sundby, after returning from a visit to South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The Archbishop, president of the World Council of Churches (WCC), had been invited by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) to speak at their annual conference. Dr Sundby said with regret that the Swedish law, passed two years ago, prohibiting Swedish companies from investing in South Africa was not as effective as it might be because other countries are continuing to invest there.

The Church of Sweden and the Swedish Ecumenical Council played an important role in pushing for the anti-investment law, and he hoped that they could also bring about a change of attitude in other countries, in order to apply more outside pressure on the South African government.

In another development, two Swedish pastors were recently imprisoned for six days in Bolivia. They were visiting the country to meet representatives from churches and labour unions on behalf of the Christian Social Democrats in Sweden. The police explained they were arrested because they were involved in "subversive activities". Both men left Bolivia after their release.

EPS

EMINENT ECUMENICAL FIGURE  
DIES IN AUSTRIA

Vienna (EPS) - Professor Wilhelm Dantine died in Vienna, Austria, on 21 May 1981, following a painful illness. He was 69 years of age.

Professor Dantine was for many years professor of systematic theology at the University of Vienna. Among his many responsibilities he served as President of the Student Christian Movement in Austria and President of the Association of Protestant University Graduates.

He was one of the friends, supporters and activists of and for the ecumenical movement in Austria and worldwide, and inspired generations of students to whom he lectured. He was a member of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission from 1968 to 1975.

EPS



SALVATION ARMY DELEGATION  
VISITS WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Geneva (EPS) - An official delegation of the Salvation Army visited the World Council of Churches (WCC) on Wednesday, 3 June, for discussions on the Army's role within the Council.

The delegation of six senior Salvation Army officers was led by General Arnold Brown, world leader of the organization.

In an address to the staff of the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, General Brown traced the history of the Salvation Army from its beginnings, with the ministry of the Rev. William Booth in the East End of London to its present position, 116 years later, with a membership of around three million persons in 86 countries of the world.

At the staff meeting hosted by the Moderator of the WCC Central Committee, Archbishop Edward Scott, of Canada and the WCC General Secretary, Dr Philip A. Potter, General Brown explained the dual thrust of the organization's work which has been described as a "vital spiritual force with an acute social conscience".

The Salvation Army is probably the largest single social welfare organization in the world, said the General.

EPS

POLISH FILM RECEIVES PRIZE  
FROM ECUMENICAL JURY

Cannes (EPS) - During the 34th International Film Festival in Cannes, the ecumenical jury prize was awarded to Andrzej Wajda, Poland, for the film "Iron Man". The jury citation said: "The film shows the historical fight of a people to highlight the universal aspirations of mankind".

"Looks and Smiles" by Ken Loach from Great Britain received a special distinction for "the questions he raises by means of showing an authentic portrait without compassion of the young people trying to find a place in a society without hope". Another distinction was given to Hugh Hudson, from Great Britain for his film "Chariots of Fire".

EPS

(This story was first issued as a limited circulation  
Press Release. Friday, 29 May, 1981)

The State Secretary for Religious Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, Mr Klaus Gysi, visited the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, 25-29 May, for a wide ranging series of talks. He was accompanied by Mr Hans Weise, Director of International Relations in the State Secretariat for Religious Affairs. Their conversations covered the wide range of issues and concerns included within the ecumenical movement.

They met with leaders of the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation, the Conference of European Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Detailed discussions took place on the understanding these organizations have of themselves, their concerns and their projects. The importance of the cooperation of the GDR member churches within the ecumenical movement was noted and emphasized.

During the exchanges importance was given to the common understanding of the community of the churches, across boundaries and borders, in witness, service and unity. From its earliest existence, this fellowship has contributed to the promotion of forgiveness, made its stand for justice and tried to encourage Christians to work together and act responsibly towards non-Christians.

Regarding the present tense situation in world politics and in Europe because of its vulnerable geographic position, the question of mere survival has become so urgent that continued dialogue is vital and confrontation should be avoided at all costs. The participation of the churches in the realisation of the Helsinki Agreements on Security and Cooperation were specially mentioned in this context.

On the basis of the Gospel and, using the means available to them, the churches - linked with each other in the ecumenical movement - carry a special role and mandate to act as peacemakers and builders of trust among nations. In fulfilling this task they may at times become critical partners.

During the discussions, the cooperation of the GDR Churches with other member churches of the international ecumenical movement was acknowledged. It was emphasized that bilateral relationships of churches are a most significant expression of the ecumenical community. In that context church representatives pointed to the expectations of African churches, i.e. in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tanzania, who would like closer contact with churches in the GDR, on an ecumenical level.

Addressing the staff of the Ecumenical Centre, Mr Gysi outlined the relationship of state and church in the GDR. He explained that a "church in socialism", is neither a "socialist church", nor a "church of socialism". He said that a significant contribution by the Christian community had been made to the reconstruction of the GDR after World War II. "Today they are citizens like everybody else, enjoying equal rights, equal responsibilities, and equal recognition", he said. While underlining the principle of separation of church and state, Mr Gysi mentioned as criteria for their relationship, independence, respect for each others identity and tolerance for each other's position.



During the exchange, mention was made of planned ecumenical events of international importance, i.e. the meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches in Dresden in August this year, and the ecumenical events planned for the 500th celebration of Martin Luther's birthday in 1983. Further recommendations concerning the style of cooperation between churches in the GDR and the ecumenical organizations will continue to be explored.

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(This communiqué is published jointly by the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.)

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 25 JUNE 1981



TRANSNATIONALS - CONCERN OF  
EASTERN EUROPEANS

Budapest (EPS) - For the first time the World Council of Churches (WCC) has organized a consultation in Eastern Europe on the subject of transnational corporations. Held from 1-5 June in Budapest, by the Programme on Transnationals, the consultation had as its theme "Socialist economies, transnational capital and Christian responsibility".

The meeting brought together some 20 bishops, ministers, priests and theological professors from WCC member churches in six Eastern European countries and two representatives from the Science Academies of Moscow and Budapest. Other participants included observers from Angola, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands. The meeting was one of a series of regional consultations being held in order to prepare for an international conference to be held in November 1981, in Bad Boll (FRG) on "Transnational Corporations and the Mission of the Churches".

In the final document, the consultation said that "to overcome the negative influence of the TNCs in the world market, it is necessary that socialist countries, countries of the non-aligned movement, movements for national liberation and progressive forces in the western countries work together".

The consultation also noted that due to the concentration of capital of transnationals the process of decision-making in western countries is becoming more and more centralised. It is the reverse in the socialist states, said the consultation, where "socialism is a process of building-up people's participation at all levels of social life, especially of the workers, who are the major producers of the economy".

The Budapest consultation criticised the transnationals for, among other things, their resistance and opposition to the bringing about of a change of structures without which a more just and sustainable society cannot emerge, for the obstacles they put in the way of negotiations on limitation of armaments and disarmament, and finally for the manipulation of public opinion. All these "contribute to preserve a world order which relies on waste, inequality and exploitation". Consequently, it is urgent that all forces join together in order to arrive at a new international economic order, it was suggested.

In commenting on the meeting, the director of the WCC's programme on transnationals, Marcos Arruda, declared that "the prime virtue of this consultation has been to sensitize the Christians in the socialist countries of Europe towards the questions of economic and social justice".

EPS

WCC TEAM VISIT DRAWS  
STATE CRITICISM

Sydney (EPS) - A World Council of Churches international team which began a 17 day country-wide tour this week to assess the situation of Australian Aborigines has stirred national political controversy.

The Premiers of Western Australia and Queensland - two Australian states most often accused of racism - have both refused to meet the WCC team. The Queensland Premier has also barred any of his state officials from meeting them.

But the team members will have discussions with Aboriginal communities and church representatives throughout the country and will meet with the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Senator Peter Baume.

The aim of the visit is to focus new international attention on the conditions of Australian Aborigines, to challenge the Australian churches in their response to racism, and to support Aboriginal people in their struggle for justice. The initiative for the visit came from the Australian churches and WCC World Mission and Evangelism Conference in Melbourne last year.

At a press conference in Sydney, Mr Gary Foley, chairperson of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee of the Australian Council of Churches (ACC), said the important point about the visit was that the Aboriginal people had a say. "Aborigines have chosen all the places where this team is going and we have deliberately chosen some of the worst places in Australia for the team to visit", he said. "We want the team to see the real situation, to talk to Aboriginal people and to find out from the people themselves what their problems are and what they perceive to be the answers to those problems."

Commenting on his refusal to meet the WCC team, the Queensland Premier, Mr Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, said: "Our Aborigines live in a paradise compared with the way some people in other countries live."

Ms Jean Skuse, General Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches (which is co-sponsoring the team visit with the WCC), said that if the Premier believed what he said, he should welcome the international team visit as an opportunity to correct misunderstandings. Some people overseas had heard comments which suggested that there was a parallel between the treatment of Aborigines in Queensland and the apartheid situation in South Africa, she said.

Dr Anwar Barkat, director of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism and a team member, said he did not know why the two Premiers wanted to miss the chance to make their racial views known internationally.

The ACC Executive Committee released a statement expressing disappointment about the two Premiers' actions. "We hope this visit will provide an opportunity for all Australians to reflect on the situation of Australian Aborigines and to make new resolve to ensure justice for the Aborigines", said the statement. Mr Gary Foley told the Sydney press conference that Aborigines hoped the visit would lead to an independent report to be distributed internationally. "We hope that through increased international

(more)



awareness of our problems and increased international support there will be increased international diplomatic and political pressure on the Australian Government to change its attitude to justice for Aboriginal people", he said.

Dr Barkat said: "We want to waken the conscience of those Australians who do believe in human dignity, to challenge them to stand up and show their solidarity with the Aboriginal community. We've not come to condemn but to ask for real solidarity which always involves suffering with those who are oppressed."

The international team includes members from Pakistan, Great Britain, Zaire, Costa Rica and the German Democratic Republic.

EPS

Note to Editors: Press conferences scheduled for the team at the conclusion of the Australian visit are:

1. CANBERRA - 3.30 pm on Wednesday, 1 July in the National Press Club.
2. SYDNEY - 3.30 pm on Thursday, 2 July in the VIP lounge at the TAA Terminal in Sydney Airport.

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#### NEW APPOINTMENTS AT THE WCC

Geneva (EPS) - The Ecumenical Press Service (EPS) is to have a new editor from 1 July with the appointment of Thomas H. Dorris (34). Assistant director since 1977 and director since October 1980 of the News Bureau of the Lutheran Council in the USA, Mr Dorris was between 1975 and 1977 a journalist with the Religious News Service, the largest interconfessional press service in the USA.

Robin E. Gurney, who has edited the EPS since March 1977 will, from 1 July, become the Communications Coordinator for the work of the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS).

Fulvia Maria Esther Prieto (35), took up the position of Research Secretary in the Programme to Combat Racism, on 1 April. Ms Prieto is a Paraguayan lawyer. In recent years she has worked with Paraguayan minorities as a consultant to the Episcopal Conference, the Anglican Church and the Indian Association of Paraguay.

EPS

BRITISH CHURCHES ISSUE GUIDELINES  
ON DIALOGUE

London (EPS) - Guidelines on dialogue with adherents of non-Christian faiths in Britain have been published by the British Council of Churches' (BCC) Committee for Relations with People of Other Faiths.

The publication lists the 13 guidelines on dialogue with people of other faiths issued by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1979 and distils these into four principles: "Dialogue begins when people meet each other; dialogue depends upon mutual understanding and mutual trust; dialogue makes it possible to share in service to the community; dialogue becomes the medium of authentic witness".

The guidelines represent the consensus of the BCC committee, which spans the ecclesiastical spectrum from Roman Catholic to conservative evangelical. They quote Vatican II on recognizing what is good and holy in non-Christian religions and tackle the question of reconciling dialogue and evangelism. "Religion is not like a suit of clothes which may fit one person beautifully and look ridiculous on the next," say the guidelines. "If we are concerned with religion we cannot avoid being concerned with truth - otherwise we are playing games, and dangerous games at that. These things matter. When believers of different world faiths put forward ideas that contradict one another, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some are right and some are wrong.

"It is hard to believe, for example, that the Hindu idea of the soul being reborn many times and the Christian idea of resurrection can both be right, even though the word 'immortality' may be used in both cases. Many people assume that underneath the difference we all really believe in the same things, whatever name we go by, but this conviction is one which has grown out of the experience of Christians from different traditions talking to one another. People who have studied other faiths and known their adherents for many years have often found that the fundamental differences grow larger and the gulfs deeper".

The background to the British guidelines is provided by the development of post-war Britain into a multi-faith, multi-cultural society with 1,500,000 Moslems, 400,000 Hindus, 200,000 Sikhs, and possibly as many as 100,000 Buddhists.

EPS



REFUGEES AND MILITARISATION CENTRAL  
CONCERNS FOR INTER-CHURCH AID

Yverdon-les-Bains (EPS) - Man's inhumanity to man, as expressed in the world refugee situation and the colossal spending on armaments and militarisation worldwide, was the concern behind the deliberations of the meeting of the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS) held 8-13 June, in Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland.

In adopting a statement on "The Churches and the World Refugee Crisis" the Commission acknowledged the widespread involvement of its refugee service in a multi-million dollar programme that stretches around the world from Kampuchea, Somalia and Latin America to resettlement projects in Europe, North America, and Australasia.

The refugee crisis which forces millions of people to leave their homes is described as "one of the most dramatic phenomena of our times" caused by "man's inhumanity to man".

Refugees, says the statement, are "victims of the intrinsic injustices of societies and of brutal armed conflicts". These people are "struggling for survival, for a place of refuge, for identity and belonging. They are in search of justice, peace and human dignity".

The statement calls attention to the seriousness of the trends affecting the lives and future of refugees such as political instability in the less-developed world and the potential racial and ethnic conflicts which can occur when refugees from poor third world countries move to western societies who are themselves experiencing high unemployment problems and other economic difficulties.

At the same time, the statement says, churches should be more vigilant and active on behalf of refugees by, among other things, exercising an effective advocacy role to ensure that refugees' basic human rights are respected. In addition, they should ensure that refugee assistance includes meeting both the immediate and longer term needs of refugees and acting on political, conciliatory or socio-economic levels, to prevent new movement of refugees.

In his report to the Commission, CICARWS director, Mr Jean Fischer, introduced the theme of the next WCC Assembly, scheduled for July 1983, in Vancouver, Canada, "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World" as one in which CICARWS could be fully involved because "our mandate and our activities place us alongside all those whose life is threatened, crippled, or destroyed", he said. He continued by saying that for the majority of God's creatures death comes too soon by starvation, sickness, torture and bombs. "We must ask ourselves what this message, Jesus Christ - the Life of the World may mean for today for the two-thirds of humanity whose 'life' is not worth living," he said. Mr Fischer went on: "This affirmation is an invitation, the offer of an alternative in accordance with God's will. The 'life' we are given in Jesus Christ is life in abundance for all. We are called to bear witness to this 'life'."

One way of bearing this witness is in exposing the evils of armaments and militarisation. A panel discussion at the Commission looked at this subject from a number of world view points.

(more)

Dr Paul McCleary from the USA; Mr Jan Pronk, Netherlands; Miss Marta Palma, Chile; Mr Pierre Damida, Upper Volta; and Mr Ninan Koshy, India; formed the panel for the discussion.

With the background of military expenditures amounting to one million dollars a minute, the Commission, in their statement, drew attention to the urgent need for the churches to call into question the concept of security that lies behind militarisation. They should rather support an understanding of security based on the rights of the people, justice and well-being, it was stated. In addition, churches should develop and disseminate an understanding of stewardship and sharing of the earth's resources that clarifies the misuse of resources through armaments.

A new spirituality should also be nurtured which recognizes that the crucified Christ has participated in the human suffering of people. But a spirituality which is inspired by the resurrected Christ, to survive in a situation of constant threat of destruction and death and to work, with hope, for a change in this situation.

Other subjects discussed during the Commission meeting included a on food aid which, it is believed cannot solve a country's food deficit and does not challenge the root causes of hunger; the International Year of Disabled Persons, when WCC and UN action on the year was presented; relations with the Roman Catholic Church as it relates to inter-church aid and relief work, and the programme of emergency and development in the Sahel and Kampuchea.

A feature of the meeting was the direct involvement of Commissioners in the life of the churches of the Canton of Vaud. More than 20 churches received visitors in services on the Sunday prior to the Commission's opening. During the week a public meeting was addressed by the WCC's General Secretary, Dr Philip Potter, in which he looked forward to the next assembly in 1983. Receptions for the Commission, under its moderator Bishop John Samuel, from Pakistan, were given by both the town of Yverdon-les-Bains and the local and cantonal church authorities.

CICARWS is one of the five sub-units which made up the Justice and Service Unit of the WCC. It has, in recent years, been studying closely the need for the ecumenical sharing of resources and what it means to be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed peoples of the world.

EPS



ROMAN CATHOLIC - WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
AFFIRM STEADILY GROWING COLLABORATION

Geneva (EPS) - A wide-ranging review of current ecumenism opened this year's annual meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (WCC). This JWG, set up in 1965 to develop ecumenical collaboration between the two bodies, met from 9-13 June at the retreat centre "Le Cénacle" in Geneva, Switzerland. The session was chaired jointly by Bishop Ramon Torrella, Vice-President of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, and Dr Claire Randall, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, USA.

"What are our priorities in the ecumenical movement at a time when the very existence of the oikoumene (the whole inhabited earth) is in danger?" asked Dr Philip Potter, General Secretary of the WCC, in introducing his review of the ecumenical situation. Both he and Bishop Torrella in his corresponding introduction stressed the need for ecumenical education and promoting a greater awareness of ecumenical activities. Whatever the difficulties, Bishop Torrella stressed that the realism needed will always be a Christian realism, and therefore open and optimistic in the light of faith.

In the light of this review, the JWG began preparations for a Fifth Official Report to be finalized in 1982 and presented to the two parent bodies. The report will cover the period since the WCC's Nairobi Assembly in 1975, during which the work of the JWG has been organized around church unity, common witness and development and peace.

Collaboration in the area of social thought and action continues as a JWG priority. The meeting endorsed a proposal for the formation of a Joint Consultative Group between corresponding Roman Catholic and World Council offices. The structure and the functioning of this Joint Consultative Group are to remain flexible during the agreed upon three year period. It shall aim at being "a credible and visible expression of ecumenical collaboration in the field of social thought and action". The Joint Consultative Group is encouraged to develop the active participation of bodies and programmes outside the Geneva and Rome offices, to open the Group up to outside questioning and experiences.

A major area of JWG activity since 1976 has centred on the theme "The Unity of the Church - the Goal and the Way". This resulted in a study document "Towards a Confession of the Common Faith", prepared with the help of the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC and published in 1980. At this meeting the JWG reviewed recent consultations on unity of the church undertaken by the WCC, and the Christian World Communions, with the active participation of Roman Catholic theologians.

In particular the JWG welcomed the proposal to hold a small exploratory consultation on councils of churches in February 1982 with special emphasis on the implications of Roman Catholic participation in such councils for the search for the unity of the church. The JWG further recognized the "increasing importance of the 'reception' of ecumenical agreements and doctrinal convergences" as well as the need "to identify visible interim steps that can be taken towards unity".

(more)

The Joint Working Group's focus on "Common Witness" was seen at this meeting as a major emphasis for future work. A substantial study paper on the subject has been published recently in several languages and widely distributed. Using the document, planning is underway for a series of follow-up consultations to explore opportunities for common witness regionally and in more detail. The JWG expects the theological perspective provided by common witness to increasingly "become an inspiring appeal and a unifying force for the common social thought and action as well as for the continuing study on the unity of the church", says a final statement from the meeting. This same common witness is also expected to help churches receive and accept the doctrinal convergences which are slowly emerging in ecumenical research.

The meeting also heard about preparations for the WCC's Sixth Assembly to be held in July 1983 in Vancouver, Canada. The WCC has invited the Roman Catholic Church to be represented at the Assembly by 20 official delegated-observers, and the JWG gave particular attention to Roman Catholic participation in and contribution to the preparatory process for the Assembly.

Further items of discussion were the ongoing collaboration between the Roman Catholic Church and WCC in the areas of dialogue with people of living faiths and ideologies, aid and relief, Christian medical service, development, human rights and disarmament, theological education, laity formation, and the community of women and men in the church.

In all these different fields, the Joint Working Group sought to promote what it described as a "steadily growing collaboration between the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church towards an ever more visible and meaningful express of what we already have in common".

EPS

MAX THURIAN HONOURED

Naples (EPS) - The Catholic Faculty of Theology of Naples has conferred an honorary degree on Brother Max Thurian, of the Taizé ecumenical community.

A reformed theologian and observer at the Vatican II, Brother Max received the honour on 28 May. He is at the moment an advisor to the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, where he has responsibility for the revision of the theological texts on baptism, eucharist and the ministry.

Brother Max has had particularly close ties over a number of years with the church of Naples and the Theological Faculty, where he has given a number of lectures.

EPS



CELEBRATIONS MARK SIXTEEN HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY  
OF SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Istanbul (EPS) - Celebrations have taken place in Istanbul marking the sixteen hundredth anniversary of the second ecumenical council of Constantinople.

At Istanbul, where the confession of faith known as the "Creed of Nicea-Constantinople" was formulated in 381, the Ecumenical Patriarch, Demetrios I, invited representatives of Orthodox, Catholic, Protestant and Anglican churches of many countries to commemorate this event, from 5-7 June 1981. Various liturgical celebrations were a feature of these days.

Patriarch Demetrios I, during one of his addresses, reminded participants that the "Creed" of Christians, the principal work of the second ecumenical council, "had envisaged a united humanity acknowledging and glorifying God". But, he added, "we Christians have failed in this great call; we must now confess it with sincerity and humility". He had invited Christians on this occasion "to gather together, in a self-critical way and to acknowledge their responsibility towards the Christian, non-Christian and atheist worlds".

The World Council of Churches was represented at these celebrations by the General Secretary, Rev. Dr. Philip Potter, who acknowledged the significant role "the ecumenical patriarchate and the sister Orthodox Churches have played ... in making the Nicea-Constantinople Creed understood in its depth by the whole Christian family". Alluding to the famous "filioque" clause, a source of division between the Western and Eastern church traditions, Dr Potter said: "In the WCC we have carried out a wide ranging study of this Creed, and we are hopeful that the churches will now restore it to its original form and so make a further step towards confessing our common faith together".

EPS

SWISS TO TAKE NEW MEASURES  
AGAINST APARTHEID

Berne (EPS) - The Swiss Council of Evangelical Missions (SCEM) will, in the future be financing, each year at least one project of the WCC's Programme to Combat Racism (PCR). The SCEM has also asked its member organizations to ensure that their financial reserves are not deposited with Swiss banks that are involved in the financing of loans to South Africa. The SCEM has also asked the Federation of Protestant Churches (FPC) to strengthen dialogue with anti-apartheid missions and movements in Switzerland. These decisions were taken during their annual meeting in Bern, 11 June 1981.

These decisions were the outcome of long discussions concerning the goodwill mission of the FPC which has been active for the last five years between black and white Christians in South Africa. Last spring, relationships with the white Dutch Reformed Church were suspended. The president of the SCEM, Mr G. Morier-Genoud, declared that at this stage it is difficult to anticipate whether this will be the end of the FPC's reconciliation efforts.

(more)

It is, however, quite possible that the FPC will continue conducting a dialogue with the black churches. This would be in accordance with views expressed by their black South African partners who argue that by supporting the oppressed they become equal partners in dialogue. For as long as the partners do not have equal rights they cannot be reconciled.

New developments will probably be announced when the FPC holds its annual assembly this month.

EPS

#### FIRST INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE FOR HINDUS AND CHRISTIANS

Rajpur, North India (EPS) - The understanding of justice as it relates to the search for community; the problem of caste as a basis of social order; the place of women in society, and the changing role of religious beliefs were the main subjects under discussion at an international Hindu-Christian meeting here, 30 May - 6 June.

The meeting, held at the Christian Retreat and Study Centre, Rajpur, was sponsored by the World Council of Churches' (WCC) sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies (DFI) in cooperation with the National Council of Churches of India, the Orthodox Church in India and the Church of North India. It brought together Christians and Hindus mainly from India but also from many parts of the world such as South Africa, Kenya, Trinidad, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Europe and the USA, where people of the two faiths live as neighbours in substantial numbers. Representatives of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India also took part in the discussions.

The Rajpur meeting was significant as it was the first international Hindu-Christian meeting of its kind although the sub-unit has facilitated local Hindu-Christian meetings in the past.

The meeting dealt with the theme "Religious Resources for a Just Society". Among the topics included under this theme were: the understanding of justice in the two traditions and the way this understanding works out in society; the use and misuse of religious beliefs in binding and maintaining social structures, and the spiritual foundations of the search for a just society.

The Rajpur meeting included visits to Hardware, in order that participants could experience for themselves popular Hinduism, and to the Sivananda Ashram at Rishikesh as the guest of the Swami Chiddhananda who was himself a participant in the dialogue meeting.

The meetings were jointly moderated by Dr Stanley J. Samartha, Bangalore, formerly director of the DFI, and Dr Seshagiri Rao of the University of Virginia, USA.

EPS



ANGLICANS RE-HALLOW MIDDLE  
EAST CENTRE

Cyprus (EPS) - The re-hallowing of Saint Paul's Church, Nicosia, Cyprus, as the Cathedral of the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the enthronement of the Bishop took place 15 May.

Representatives of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, the Apostolic delegate, the Maronite Bishop and other churches in Cyprus took part. The ceremony marked the climax of a meeting of the Joint Diocesan Synod attended by delegates from the Gulf States and Cyprus.

Bishop Leonard Ashton, who has been Bishop of the Diocese since its creation in 1976, not only has jurisdiction over Anglicans in Cyprus but serves on an ecumenical basis many thousands of expatriates of European, Asian and American origin throughout the Arabian Peninsula and in Iraq.

EPS

US PRESBYTERIANS RE-ELECT  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Houston (EPS) - The United Presbyterian Church general assembly has voted overwhelmingly here to re-elect William P. Thompson, 62, to a fourth five-year term as the church's chief executive.

Mr Thompson has held many positions in ecumenical organizations. He has been president of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and has been a member of the World Council of Churches' Central Committee since 1968.

Mr Thompson, a lawyer by training, succeeded the Rev. Eugene Carson Blake in the office of stated clerk in 1966, becoming the first layman to serve in that post since 1883.

EPS



# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 9 JULY 1981



ABORIGINES WELCOME WCC'S  
CONTROVERSIAL TEAM VISIT

Sydney (EPS) - In spite of continuing hostile reactions from three Australian state governments, the World Council of Churches (WCC) team visiting the Aborigines has received a very warm welcome from the Aboriginal people.

"The welcome, openness and hospitality of the Aboriginal people has been most impressive" said British team member Pauline Webb, "I would have been upset if the Aboriginal people had given us the kind of reaction we have received from the politicians", she said.

Queensland Premier, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, and Western Australian Premier, Sir Charles Court, have rejected invitations to meet with the team, accusing the team of having closed minds and being communist influenced. Northern Territory chief minister, Mr Paul Everingham, wrote in a letter to team organiser Jean Skuse, General Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches that "it appears that they (the team) are seeking confrontation rather than consultation and they appear to have prejudged the whole matter".

According to one newspaper report, a Western Australian government minister has called on the team to go home, suggesting this would be the greatest contribution it could make to the Aborigines. The Queensland government has reportedly assigned police special branch agents to maintain a surveillance on the WCC team when it visits Queensland.

During their three-day visit to Alice Springs in central Australia, the team was hosted by the Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. They met with a variety of Aboriginal organisations including the legal service, health service, housing cooperative and the Aboriginal run Yipirinya school, visited the remote Papunya community, 260 kms west of Alice Springs, and worshipped and preached in the local Alice Springs churches.

At the small, isolated community of approximately 700 people at Papunya, the resident doctor told the WCC team that the children in the community spent around one third of their first two years of life in the Alice Springs hospital suffering from malnutrition, gastro-enteritis and similar diseases. "Ten years ago, 40 per cent of the children died" said Dr Adrian Sleigh.

"People here are as sick as any of the people I have worked with in Thailand, India, Brazil and Haiti" said Dr Sleigh who, previous to coming to Papunya, had worked with the World Health Organisation. "We have malnutrition in this community just the same as that found in the third world", he explained.

At a meeting with the leaders of the Aboriginal organisations in Alice Springs prior to leaving for Darwin, Mr Bob Randell, director of the Aboriginal legal service, stressed the importance of land rights for Aborigines. "We want the Australian government to recognise the prior ownership of Australia by Aborigines. We want compensation for the land taken so that Aborigines do not have to go to the government each year for funds that are never enough", he said.

(more)

The Aborigines also sought international support via the WCC team for their struggle to protect their sacred sites from tourist developments or mining operations. "The whites in Alice Springs are unaware that the Aboriginal people here are still practising their religion", said one speaker.

The message to the WCC team was that the Aborigines are determined to control their own destiny and to preserve their culture. In reply Dr Anwar Barkat, director of the World Council of Churches' Programme to Combat Racism, told the Aborigines that their struggle for human rights is their own struggle but people around the world are concerned and want to stand in solidarity in their struggle. "We are with you, fight on", he said.

EPS

#### TEN MILLION DOLLAR TARGET FOR CHURCH LOAN FUND

Geneva (EPS) - The Board of the Ecumenical Church Loan Fund (ECLOF) the 35 year old lending organization closely linked to the World Council of Churches (WCC) decided at its recent meeting to set a target of raising US \$ 2 million per year of new lending capital for each of its next five years.

Following a 33 per cent increase in lending activity in 1980 ECLOF reported a further 40 per cent increase so far this year. This had led to a severe restriction on the availability of lending capital. For the first time in years ECLOF finds itself unable to meet the requests of its 53 national committees for loans.

The board discussed the actions to be taken in the face of the explosion of growth and agreed that, in addition to its target for new lending capital to be raised, a breathing space was required to allow the staff to consolidate the growth of the last few years.

A working group composed of representatives of the Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS), the WCC's General Secretariat, and the ECLOF board will examine options for dealing with ECLOF's expanding activities for the next few years.

EPS



130,000 ATTEND HAMBURG  
CHURCH FESTIVAL

Hamburg (EPS) - The 19th "Kirchentag" of the German Protestant Churches, which took place 17-21 June in Hamburg, was notable for two main features - youth participation and Christian concerns for peace. It was estimated that some 75 per cent of the 130,000 participants were less than 25 years of age. In the various discussions, round tables, Bible studies, worship services and talks, all on the general theme "Be not Afraid", the problems of peace played a prominent role.

On 20 June, a demonstration for peace, organized on the fringe of the Kirchentag by a number of action groups, brought 80,000 people on to the streets of Hamburg. "It was described as one of the most important demonstrations of its type seen in the Federal Republic since 1955.

Addressing the Kirchentag participants in the closing meeting, Dr Konrad Raiser, deputy general secretary of the World Council of Churches (WCC) said: "We have been given courage by the theme to risk taking the first steps out of the zone of fear". He added: "Do not fear to do that which appears to you to be just". Recalling the four main discussion themes at the Kirchentag the WCC leader said: "Do not fear to take the first step in implementing the discussions on faith, community, peace and a credible life.

This Kirchentag was, according to observers, an event marked by the spirituality of the participants. In addition, observers were struck by the numbers of young people in the Bible studies and in the 200 eucharistic celebrations. Most of the 1565 meeting places were overcrowded.

At the end of the Kirchentag various resolutions asked the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) to put pressure on the Bonn government to withdraw its agreement to the installation of the medium range cruise missiles and to initiate immediately disarmament negotiations. According to the signatories of these resolutions the 572 medium range missiles fitted with nuclear warheads which NATO has decided to install in Western Europe by 1983, would make a "limited theatre" nuclear war possible.

The Bonn government should, in addition, stop training military and paramilitary personnel from developing countries, because "consciously or unconsciously" this action causes oppression to the poor and hungry in a number of dictatorial regimes.

In addition to invited visitors from overseas some 10,000 German Catholics took part in the Kirchentag. The next such festival will take place in 1983 in Hanover.

EPS

WORLD YWCA EXECUTIVE  
MEETS IN GENEVA

Cartigny, Geneva (EPS) - An emotional reunion with a South African leader and a speech attacking the US agricultural system were the highlights at the annual Executive Committee meeting of the World YWCA held here, 12-22 June.

Joyce Seroke, general secretary of the World Affiliated YWCA of South Africa, joined the Committee for her first appearance outside Africa since her passport was revoked by the South African government at the time of the 1976 Soweto demonstrations. Joyce, who was then a member of the World YWCA Executive Committee, was imprisoned for three months without charges and then released. Her passport was restored in May of this year.

"Many visitors to South Africa think blacks are getting a new deal", Joyce Seroke told the 20-member Executive Committee. "But we are not getting a new deal in fundamental ways. Blacks still lack the vote and freedom of movement. We know the changes in South Africa we want and sitting in a white park is not fundamental."

The World Affiliated YWCA of South Africa operates a number of programmes, from soup kitchens for old-age pensioners in Soweto to pre-schools for children in the white-designated "resettlement" areas for blacks, Joyce Seroke reported. "We are accused by our young of giving programmes to soothe apartheid", she said, "but at least we are holding the hands of our people".

In a major address to the Executive Committee, Susan George, author of "How the Other Half Dies" and a fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC, criticized the capital-intensive US agricultural system as a "bad model for the rest of the world". The United States boasts of its agricultural productivity - "one farmer feeds 65 persons" - but productivity is measured per farmer and not per acre of land, she pointed out. "Denmark's productivity per acre is double US output."

The US model of agriculture has "enormous costs" in energy use, and is detrimental to the environment Ms George said. Its beneficiaries are the transnational corporations that supply the machinery and fertilizers and process the food.

Moreover, the system is being "foisted on the Third World" under the banner of the Green Revolution, she said, "with disastrous effects". Those effects, she said, include hunger, caused by an increase in the number of landless labourers unable to pay rising food prices, social disruptions affecting women subsistence farmers in particular, and the marketing of "junk" foods and products like infant formula.

In her report, General Secretary Erica Brodie challenged the YWCAs in 84 countries "to express more clearly our identity as a women's Christian movement engaged in social change". She urged member movements to prod their governments to implement the Plan for Action adopted by the United Nations Mid-Decade for Women Conference in Copenhagen last year.

(more)



To underscore the YWCA's Christian basis, the Executive Committee endorsed a proposal for a Bible study being drafted by an ecumenical group of women theologians and lay people. The study will deal with women in relationship to five world priorities which the YWCA has adopted: health, energy and environment, human rights, peace, and refugees and migrants.

The Executive Committee adopted a budget of Sf 1,250,500 and additional budgets for refugee and rehabilitation services and its Programme of Cooperation for Development. It heard reports on its extensive leadership development programme for youth and women in such areas as management of small-scale industries and appropriate technology. The Executive Committee accepted an invitation from the National YWCA of Singapore to hold its quadrennial World Council there in 1983.

A reception during the Executive Committee meeting honoured World YWCA President Nita Barrow, who was awarded the title of Dame of St. Andrew recently by Queen Elizabeth for her contributions to health care and voluntary agencies.

EPS

HONG KONG CHURCH WORKER  
HONOURED

Hong Kong (EPS) - The Rev. Karl Stumpf, officer-in-charge of the Migration Services Department of Hong Kong Christian Service, has been awarded the honour of Commander, Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List.

In a letter to Mr Stumpf, the Governor of Hong Kong, Sir Murray MacLehose, says that: "Hong Kong is indebted to you for so many things: work for the blind, the fight against narcotic addiction, the care and resettlement of Vietnamese refugees, to mention only a few of the major fields in which you have made an outstanding contribution. Thank you for being such an eloquent and persuasive spokesman for Hong Kong."

EPS

ROMAN CATHOLIC/METHODIST TALKS -  
"SHARED UNDERSTANDING"

London (EPS) - Some convergence between Catholics and Methodists on the question of papal authority has been recorded by the report of the Joint Commission between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Methodist Council, summarizing its discussions over the years from 1977 to 1981.

The report has now appeared as a whole for the first time, but the first two of its three sections were published separately in 1979 and 1980.

The report pointed out that the old oppositions of scripture and tradition had given way to a shared understanding "that scripture in witness to the living tradition from which it arose has a normative role for the total tradition of the church as it lives and is guided still by the spirit of truth".

It suggested that the emotions surrounding such relatively modern terms as infallibility and irreformability could be diminished if they were looked at in the light of their shared doctrine concerning the Holy Spirit.

"The papal authority, no less than any other within the church, is a manifestation of the continuing presence of the spirit of love in the church or it is nothing," said the report. "Indeed it should in its exercise be pre-eminently such a manifestation."

But this primary aspect had been obscured by the emotions and polemics surrounding such terms as "infallibility" and "universal and immediate jurisdiction". The terms which expressed the dogma of 1870 belonged to their time, and the truth behind them was capable of fuller understanding in new settings by all concerned.

"The terms referred to are not to be explained away," the report said. "From different standpoints we are agreed that this would be neither useful nor honest. Yet they are not claims about human qualities or glorifications of an office. They are to be understood in the light of the total conception and the total responsibility of teaching and disciplinary office in the church."

The report recognized that, however the claims implied in such terms were circumscribed and clarified, it was unlikely that Methodists in the foreseeable future would feel comfortable with them.

"But Methodist awareness of the papacy has enlarged and greatly altered in recent times", the report went on, "and the general idea of a universal service of unity within the church, a primacy of charity mirroring the presence and work in the church of the spirit who is love, may well be a basis for increased understanding and convergence."

The report also pointed to "concern for the poor and the oppressed and for the conservation of God's gifts" as one test by which all authority, whether ecclesiastical or secular, was to be judged. "All arbitrary and absolute authority, denying the respect due to human beings and to creation, is unchristian", the report said.

(more)



The report further showed considerable agreement over the sacramental nature of marriage, while recognizing that Catholics spoke of marriage as a sacrament and Methodists did not. Yet, as it pointed out with a quotation from the introduction to the United Methodist Church's 1979 service of Christian marriage, this was because the Protestant reformers of the 16th century were unwilling to call marriage a sacrament because they did not regard matrimony as a necessary means of grace for salvation. "Though not necessary for salvation," this Methodist document went on, "certainly marriage is a means of grace, thus sacramental in character". The report went on to describe marriage as sacramental in nature and to say that the couple's sexual sharing should itself be understood as sacramental.

The report also expressed the hope that further dialogue on the two churches' different approaches to the problems of matrimonial nullity and of marital breakdown might well reveal closer unity of understanding, "since we are all alarmed at the trivialization of marriage and the increase of divorce in the societies from which we come".

EPS



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# CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN THE GDR

The German Democratic Republic (GDR) has a population of 17 million inhabitants, of which seven million are Christians. The majority of these belong to the eight churches of the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR, which was founded in 1969.

The Kreuzkirche in Dresden. The WCC's Central Council will hold its meeting from 16-22 August, 1981, in Dresden, and will be hosted by the Federation of Protestant Churches in the GDR.

There are some 5,000 parishes in the GDR. An estimated 10% of registered members attend Sunday services. The churches organize weekends for disabled people. Apart from the 48 hospitals, 105 homes for disabled people, nurseries, holiday and retreat centres, the churches have over 200 old peoples' homes.

Since the church and the state are separated, there are no religious education classes except in the parishes and in the homes, as here in Schwerin, in the apartment of the minister. Music plays an important rôle in church activities. A brass band day involved over 5,000 musicians, in Schwerin-on-the Oder.

The training of and information about the diaconate for church professionals participate in the diaconate) continues. A diaconate information meeting is held in Halle during a "Day for Youth".

The inauguration of the first church built in Eisenhüttenstadt, a new socialist town of 40,000 inhabitants, built in 1975.

Bishop Albrecht Schönherr, President of the Federation of Protestant Churches, handing the keys of the church to the Minister.

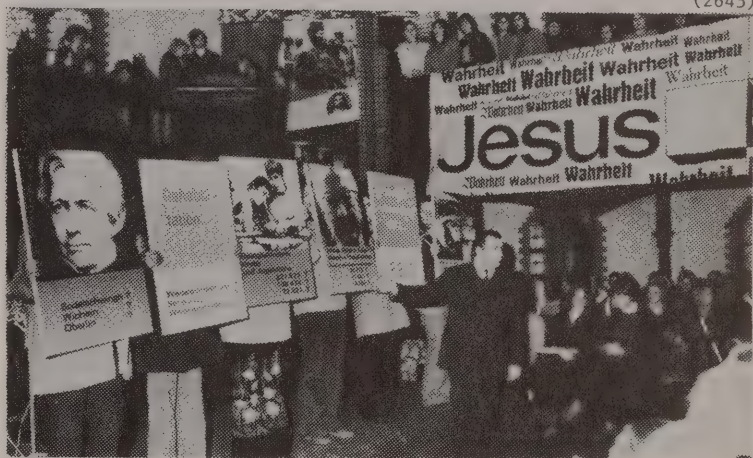
A historical meeting held on 6 March 1978 between the Federation of Protestant Churches and Mr E. Honecker, President of the State Council of the GDR.

(B.Bohm/Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR).

Photo: "Kirchentag" in Erfurt 1978.



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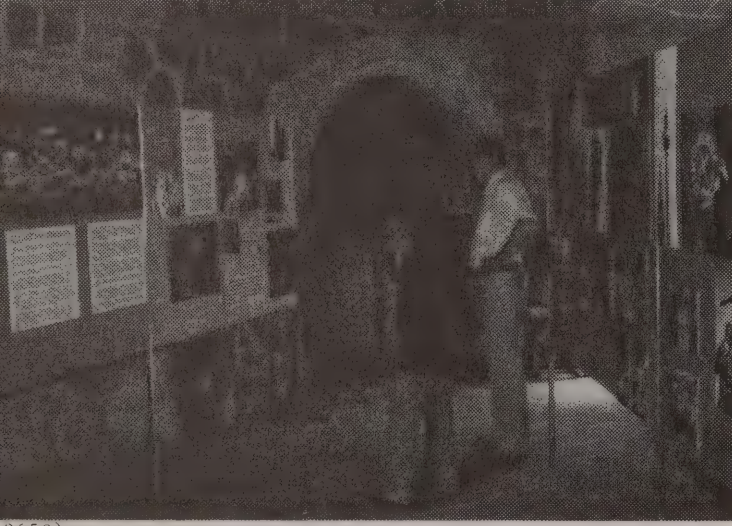
# INTER - CHURCH AID IN SESS

The WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugees and World Service (CICARWS) met in Yverdon-le-Bains, Switzerland. (See EPS No.17 - 18 June 1964) A 12th century castle was the setting. Refugees and militarism were two items discussed (2650) A public exhibition featured CICARWS' (2651) Bishop John Samuel, Pakistan (left), welcomes Mr Magnenat from the Cantonal authorities (2652) The problems of the disabled, one subject discussed, is graphically illustrated by the difficult access to the castle. (2653) Commissioners Hans Otto Hahn, FRG (right) and Bethuel Kiplagat, Kenyan Ambassador to France, talk to WCC staffer Samuel Isaac.

Photos: Gurney/WCC.

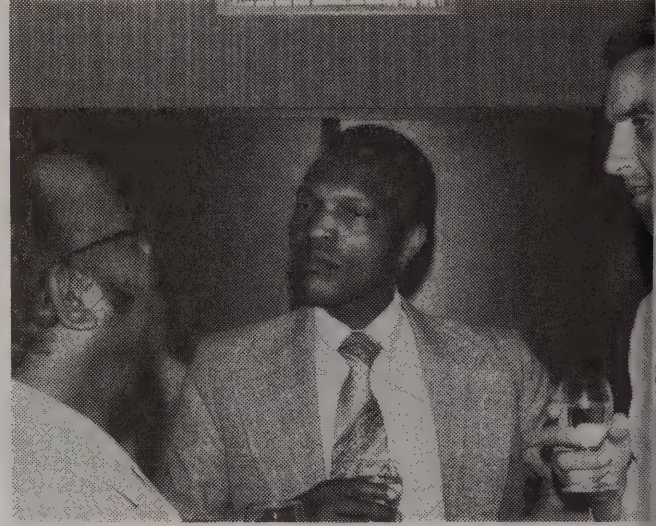


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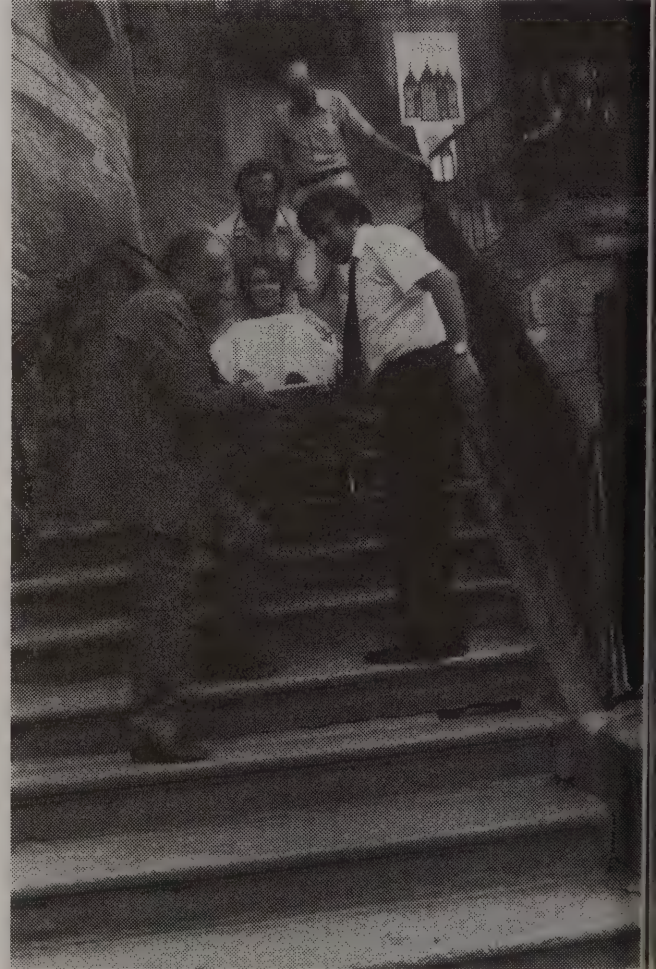


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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

- AACC : All Africa Conference of Churches
- ACC : Australian Council of Churches
- ACIS : Africa Church Information Service
- ANC : African National Congress
- BCC : British Council of Churches
- CCIA : Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
- CCPD : Commission of the Churches' Participation in Development
- CEC : Conference of European Churches
- CICARWS : Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service
- CLAI : Latin American Council of Churches
- CWME : Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
- DFI : Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies
- ECLOF : Ecumenical Church Loan Fund
- EDCS : Ecumenical Development Cooperative
- EKD : Evangelical Church in Germany
- ELTSA : End Loans to Southern Africa
- EECMY : Ethiopian Evangelical Church : Mekane Yesus
- FPC : Federation of Protestant Churches
- FRG : Federal Republic of Germany
- FSPC : Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
- GDR : German Democratic Republic
- HEKS : Relief Agency of the Swiss Protestant Federation
- JWG : Joint Working Group
- LWF : Lutheran World Federation
- MECC : Middle East Council of Churches
- NCCC : National Council of Churches in Christ in the USA
- PAC : Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
- PCR : Programme to Combat Racism
- PTE : Programme on Theological Education
- SACC : South African Council of Churches
- SACTU : South African Congress of Trade Unions
- SODEPAX : Committee on Society, Development and Peace
- SWAPO : South-West Africa People's Organizations
- TNCs : Transnational Corporations
- UNHCR : United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- WACC : World Association for Christian Communication
- WARC : World Alliance of Reformed Churches
- WMC : World Methodist Conference
- WSCF : World Student Christian Federation
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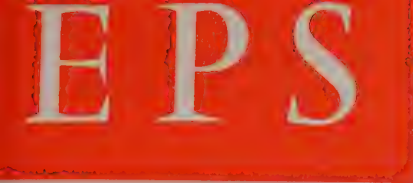
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ECUDATES: Some World Council of Churches Events in 1982\*

2-16 Jan.	Lima	Triennial Plenary: Faith and Order Commission
15-18 Feb.	Venice	Consultation: Councils of Churches in the Ecumenical Movement
15-19 Feb.	Geneva	Semi-Annual Meeting: WCC Executive Committee
22-25 Feb.	Bossey	Consultation: Ecumenical History
23-24 Feb.	Geneva	Meeting: WCC/Vatican Joint Consultative Group
25 March-3 April	Bossey	Workshop: Local, Ecumenical Dimensions of Worship
28 March-2 April	Colombo	Meeting: Christian/Muslim Dialogue
March		Consultation (Middle East) : Faith, Science, Technology
5-18 April	Bossey	Consultation: Orthodox Theology and Spirituality
14-17 May	Geneva	1983 WCC Assembly Preparations Committee
22-18 May	Bulgaria	Consultation (East Europe) : Ecumenical Sharing of Resources
May or June	Budapest	Consultation (East Europe) : Faith, Science, Technology
May	Lusaka	Consultation: Churches' Involvement in Southern Africa
5-12 June	Moscow	Meeting: WCC Communication Commission
20-29 June	Bossey	Consultation: Education for Effective Ecumenism
29 June-6 July	Ibadan	Consultation: Christian Lay Centres Participants
16-18 July	Geneva	Semi-Annual Meeting: WCC Executive Committee
19-28 July	Geneva	Annual Meeting: WCC Central Committee

\*Dates and places are subject to change. Additions and deletions are likely in the course of the year. A longer list, including other WCC meetings of a more routine or specialized nature, is available on request.





# Ecumenical Press Service

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ABORIGINE POVERTY SHOCKS  
INTERNATIONAL CHURCH TEAM

Sydney (EPS) - The poverty of Australia's aborigines shocked the World Council of Churches team during its tour of the country.

Standing amid the squalor of the Kurnangki Aboriginal camp at Fitzroy Crossing in north Western Australia, Anwar Barkat of Pakistan, leader of the WCC delegation said, "If this is not disgraceful, what can you call it?" Another member, Bena Silu of Zaire, said it was as bad as any poverty he had seen in Africa.

Two other team members, Pauline Webb of Great Britain, and Quince Duncan of Costa Rica, who travelled through Queensland when the team divided into two, saw similar appalling living conditions at the Mantaka community and Mossman Gorge reserve, the northern part of that state.

The five-member team toured Australia from 15 June to 3 July, at the invitation of the Australian Council of Churches (ACC) to assess the situation of the Aborigines, to consult with the churches, and to bring greater international attention to the situation of Aboriginal Australians.

In the Northern Territory, the team's attention was focused on the growing conflict between Aborigines and mining companies. A freeze on the granting of mining exploration permits implemented in 1976 and covering the large Aboriginal reserve of Arnhem Land, has recently been lifted and the Aborigines are deeply disturbed by the rush of mining companies moving into their traditional lands with exploration permits. "It's war in Arnhem Land", said one member of the all-Aboriginal Northern Lands Council.

At Oenpelli Aboriginal community in the heart of the Uranium province of the Northern Territory, community elder Silas Maralngurra told the team: "All the mining company can see is money. Money means nothing to me. Money is white man's business. Government is pushing all the time. When we say no, he say yes. When I say it in my own language, he doesn't understand."

On the Palm Island reserve off Townsville in north Queensland, a gathering of some 200 local residents told the team of their desire to run their own affairs. One third of the people on the island are white administrators. The Aborigines said they are given little opportunity or encouragement to develop their island and improve their living standards.

The strongest insight to emerge from the visits was the desire, ability and determination of the Aborigines to run their own affairs. "A sign of hope that impressed me most was the willingness and capability of the Aborigines to take things into their own hands", said German Democratic Republic team member Elisabeth Adler.

In Perth, capital of Western Australia, Anwar Barkat told a meeting of church leaders that Australia, "should not make light of the burden you have because you have been given much".

"If you were a poor country with a vast number of poor, our understanding and language would be different," he said, "but you are a rich country by all standards yet there are poor people who have never been part of your country".

(more)



The surprising element of the tour for Pauline Webb was "the religious questions that have been raised for me". She said she "found the spiritual dimension of the whole encounter a very deep theological challenge, posing questions for us from the West. So often we have identified Christianity with western culture, and in that way made a travesty of a great deal of the gospel," she added.

In a letter to the Australian churches, the WCC team expresses the wish "for you all the opportunity we have had of sitting alongside and listening to the hopes and fears, the dreams and pains of the Aboriginal people living in this land".

The team says its report, expected to be released in August in connection with the meeting of the WCC Central Committee in Dresden, GDR, will attempt to "give voice to what the Aborigines have said to us".

The team's visit stirred a great deal of controversy in Australia, with the premiers of Western Australia and Queensland refusing to meet with the international visitors. Anwar Barkat, team head, directs the WCC Programme to Combat Racism. (Earlier stories: EPS No.17, page 3; and EPS No.18, page 2).

EPS

--\*Russell Rollason --

\*Russell Rollason is information officer for the Australian Council of Churches.

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#### BRITISH METHODISTS BACK FIVE-CHURCH COVENANT

Norwich, England (EPS) - Almost unanimously, the British Methodist Conference has voted provisional approval for a covenant among it, the United Reformed Church, Church of England, Churches of Christ, and Moravian Church. The vote was 497-5 (three abstained) at the meeting here.

The covenant would introduce the historic episcopate into British Methodism, would lead to official mutual recognition of ministry and sacramental acts under the auspices of each group, and would generally provide for a period of growing together into greater unity.

The URC and the Anglicans have previously voted provisional approval of the covenant plan. However, at least two-thirds approval in separate votes by representatives of the Anglican bishops, other clergy, and laity is required before final Church of England approval. That vote is scheduled for the synod meeting in July 1982. (See EPS No.7, page 7).

(more)

SOME DIVORCED MAY MARRY IN  
CHURCH, ANGLICAN SYNOD SAYS

York (EPS) - The Church of England General Synod has decided that "there are circumstances in which a divorced person may be married in church during the lifetime of a former partner".

Currently, such marriages are forbidden. If a subsequent synod approves the necessary changes in Church of England procedures - something by no means certain - 1983 is the earliest estimate of the time when the new policy would go into effect.

The 3-7 July synod also featured an introduction to results of a "Partners in Mission" consultation, to be debated in more detail by the synod next February. Some of the consultants - English and overseas, Anglican and other - told the synod of some of their findings.

One Roman Catholic faulted the English Anglicans for being "incredibly respectable". She referred to her experience in visiting Anglican dioceses and parishes and seeing few working class, ethnic minority, or young people.

A South African urged the church to face the question of its ties to the state, "an irritation that keeps bobbing its head at awkward times".

In another action, the synod endorsed the principles of the Brandt Report, and urged the British government to support them at meetings of world leaders in the next months in Ottawa, Melbourne, and Mexico City. The report links many of the world's economic and security problems with the great differences in economic and other opportunities between the world's rich and poor.

EPS

POPE NAMES NEW  
POLISH PRIMATE

Rome (EPS) - Pope John Paul II has named a close advisor of the late Stefan Cardinal Wyszynski as head of the religiously dominant Roman Catholic Church in Poland.

The Pope's choice is Bishop Jozef Glemp, 52, who becomes Metropolitan Archbishop of Gniezno and Warsaw, and thus Roman Catholic primate of the country.

Reuters news agency quoted Glemp as saying he would not change policies of his predecessor, who died last May, because "the line laid down by Cardinal Wyszynski is the line we must continue taking today".

Both the communist government and the independent trade union Solidarity reportedly sent congratulations to Glemp on his appointment.

EPS



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JANUARY - JUNE 1981

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- Geographical and Organizational
- Subject

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

AACC : All Africa Conference of Churches  
ACC : Australian Council of Churches  
AUCECB : All Union Council of Evangelical  
Christians-Baptists  
CCA : Christian Conference of Asia  
CCC : China Christian Council  
CCIA : Commission of the Churches on  
International Affairs  
CCMWE : Churches Committee on Migrant  
Workers in Europe  
CCPD : Commission on the Churches'  
Participation in Development  
CCSA : Christian Concern for Southern  
Africa  
CEBC : Council of European Bishops'  
Conference  
CEC : Conference of European Churches  
CICARWS : Commission on Inter-Church Aid,  
Refugee and World Service  
CIMADE : Inter-Movement Committee for Evacuees  
CLAI : Latin American Council of Churches  
CWME : Commission on World Mission and  
Evangelism  
DFI : Dialogue with People of Living  
Faiths and Ideologies  
ECCSEC : Ecumenical Commission for Church and  
Society in the European Community  
ECLOF : Ecumenical Church Loan Fund  
EDCS : Ecumenical Development Cooperative  
Society  
EKD : Evangelical Church in Germany  
ELTSA : End Loans to Southern Africa  
FPC : Federation of Protestant Churches  
FRG : Federal Republic of Germany  
FSPC : Federation of Swiss Protestant  
Churches  
GDR : German Democratic Republic  
IAC : Inter-Aid Committee  
JWG : Joint Working Group  
LCA : Lutheran Church in America  
LWF : Lutheran World Federation  
MECC : Middle East Council of Churches  
NCCC : National Council of Churches in  
Christ in the USA  
NCCNZ : National Christian Council of  
New Zealand  
OAS : Organization of American States  
PCC : Pacific Council of Churches  
PCR : Programme to Combat Racism  
PTE : Programme on Theological Education  
SACC : South African Council of Churches  
SCEM : Swiss Council of Evangelical Missions  
SWAPO : South-West Africa People's Organization  
SYNDESMOS : World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth  
Organizations  
TNCs : Transnational Corporations  
UCMS : United Christian Missionary Society  
URC : United Reformed Church  
WARC : World Alliance of Reformed Churches  
WSCF : World Student Christian Federation  
YMCA : Young Men's Christian Association  
YWCA : Young Women's Christian Association

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 6 AUGUST 1981



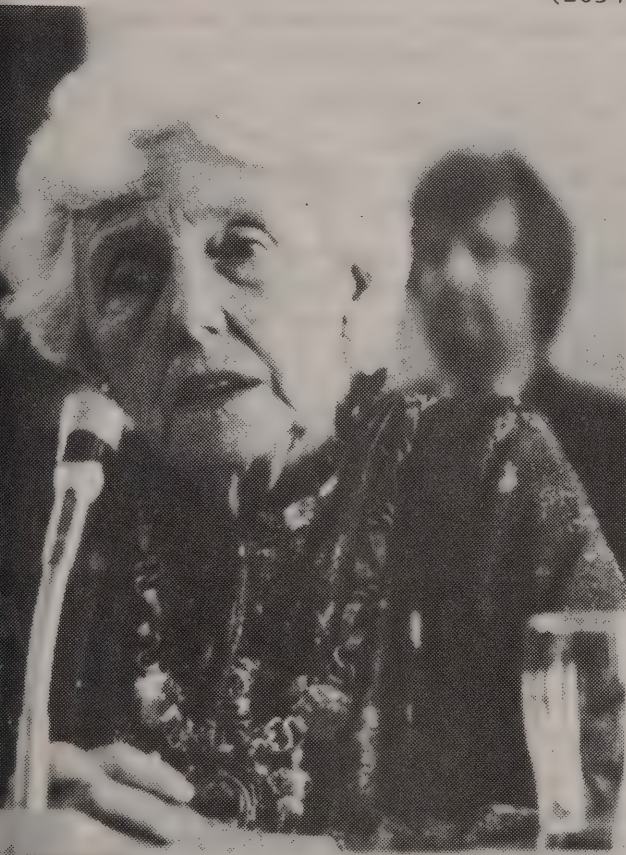
## SHEFFIELD FACES

The World Council of Churches consultation on the community of women and men in the church met in Sheffield, UK, for a week in July. (Stories: EPS No.20). Participants, among them those from the Middle East (2654), heard several speakers, including the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Enid Hattersley (2655), and West German theologians Jürgen Moltmann and Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel (2656). During the proceedings, Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie pondered a point (2657). There were lighter moments, too, as participants exchanged an international laugh (2658).

Photos: Carlos Reyes, London



(2654)



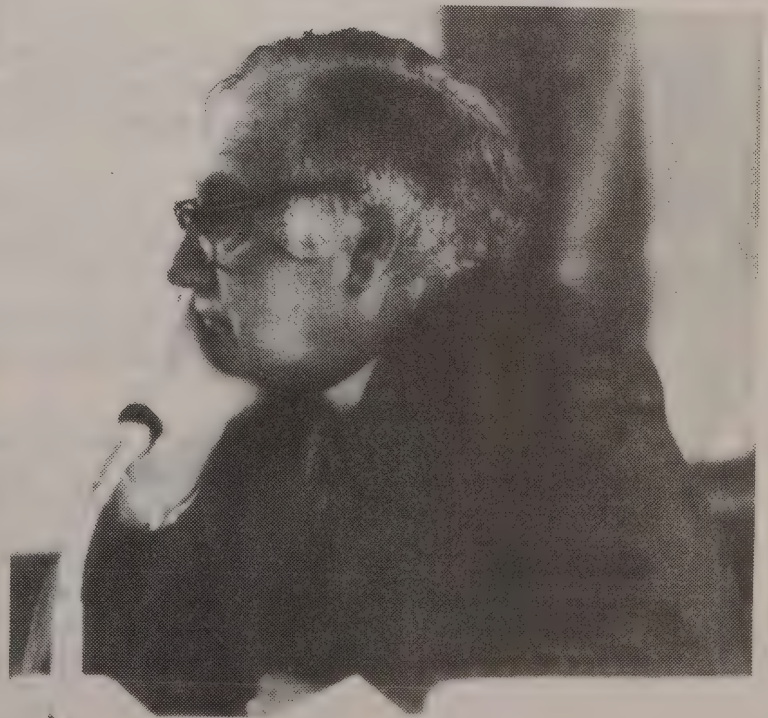
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WOMEN/MEN CONSULTATION  
RELEASES OPEN LETTER

Sheffield, UK (EPS) - A 10-day international consultation on the community of women and men in the church has issued an open letter to Christians.

The consultation, under the auspices of the World Council of Churches (WCC), included about 150 delegates from more than 50 countries. The letter says those gathered here "received a foretaste of global community of women and men vulnerable to the pain of all forms of oppression and united in struggle against them".

The letter speaks of a "world so largely controlled by men" in which women "suffer war, violence, poverty, exploitation and disparagement". It adds that "lives of men have been trapped by the effects of their having power and a supposed superiority".

Societies, it says may require radical change for women and men to have a "new partnership as equals before God". It notes "how hard it is to address and envision God in ways that respect the Christian understanding of personhood rather than suggesting male superiority".

The letter says that "for many women and men struggles against tyranny, militarism, economic exploitation and racism are the immediate task". It urges action against "exploitation, particularly where women and men have become victims of wrong patterns of development, through cheap labour, migrant labour, or tourist-oriented prostitution".

In addition, it goes on, "for many women and men there is a real pain in the frustrations of a church life controlled by male leadership, where, for instance, women feel called to the ministry of word and sacraments and ordination is not open to them or where the church has not responded to creative developments in society".

Regional groupings played what conference officials described as an unexpectedly strong role in the meeting. Particularly influential was a statement from Third World participants distributed toward the meeting's midway point.

It spoke of a "growing feeling of frustration among a large number of Third World delegates that the concerns and issues expressed so far in the plenaries have had little relevance to where we are and where we come from".

They urged discussion of the consultation subject within the "global context of disparate struggle against exploitation and poverty, hopelessness and despair".

Later, a prologue by Third World participants to a report on the seven consultation sections spoke of sexual discrimination as a "faceless, formless beast... threatening and making objects of us all, women and men".

The prologue adds that "all of us" are "engaged in a process of exploitation of the less fortunate. We Christians in the Third World", it says, "are the privileged minority. We exploit and oppress, we grow fat from the labour of thousands. Our rich women make slaves of our unfortunate sisters. We share in this guilt of dehumanising."

(more)



The prologue speaks of an "iceberg of exploitation that we are all guilty of", including that "capitalism uses cheap labour all over the world" which means "women and men... become cogs in the wheels of technology".

The statement also criticizes the dumping of cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, infant formulas and some contraceptives in Third World markets and speaks of "changing patterns of tourism" which encourage a "thriving business in prostitution".

EPS

#### WOMEN/MEN CONSULTATION ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS

Sheffield, UK (EPS) - The World Council of Churches (WCC) consultation on the community of women and men in the church has issued a report and recommendations reflecting seven major areas of its work.

The 10-day gathering at the university here came after a three-year study process. It involved hundreds of local and regional study groups.

The consultation's report and recommendations cover the authority of the Bible; identity and relationships; ministry and worship; marriage, family and life-style; authority and church structures; freedom and justice; and tradition .

The section on freedom and justice stresses the inter-relationship of all freedom struggles. It calls racism, sexism, classism, and all other forms of domination "one demonic symphony of oppression".

Focusing as one example on international tourism and prostitution, the report urges the WCC and member churches in areas concerned to set up programmes to eliminate organized prostitution by international tourist firms.

A portion of the report faults "the old economic order" which has "brought about mass poverty, glaring inequalities, social injustices, militarization, ignorance and fear among the people in every country". Affirming solidarity with victims of personal and institutional violence, it also allows that "there are certain occasions on which women and men can be called to action with the oppressed or in solidarity with them" and urges continued Christian involvement in "liberation struggles".

The section on ministry and worship deals with women's ordination but begins with a call to strengthen lay ministry by giving better training and wider responsibility.

Concerning women's ordained ministry, the report recognises the plurality of practice among churches, and calls for "continuing ecumenical exploration of churches with different practices being in communion. Also requested are "careful enquiry... into the significance of representation and symbolism of Christ in the ordained ministry" and further study of the "diaconal dimension of all ministries".

(more)

The section on marriage, family and life-style underlines the importance of the Christian family as a dynamic social force that can influence the power exercised by political and cultural agencies and through the media. The WCC is urged to recommend to member churches and the United Nations that a decade be set aside for special emphasis on the family. The section sees "alternative life styles" as a label to marginalize people who don't live in nuclear families. The report prefers instead to talk of "changing patterns of family life" and urges stronger awareness of the single person in churches and the needs of single-parent families.

The section on the place of Scripture challenges all Bible interpreters to examine the assumptions they bring to their readings, especially concerning the survival and freedoms of other classes and races. Misuse of Scripture to endorse oppression is noted and concepts of biblical authority itself are re-examined in the section. Though the "authoritative word of God", the Bible still reflects a diversity of traditions; though written in a patriarchal context, it contains "anti-patriarchal passages of great importance", the report says. It welcomes different biblical perceptions of God and stresses the need to keep God language and imagery inclusive and to make Bible interpretation a task of the whole community.

The section on authority and church structures describes a new perception of power that women would bring-"limitless, mutually shared and ever-expanding for the use of the whole human community". Such a perception removes the need for power games and domination between women and men, says the report.

It goes on to list things that "block the empowering of women and men in the church", including "rigid hierarchical structures" and "fundamentalist interpretation of Scripture". Recommendations from the section ask a 50 per cent quota for women in church structures.

The section on identity and relationships offers a vision of a new, inclusive community of mutual respect, equality and partnership, and joy that values differences and diversity and gives supreme value to loving relationships.

Such a community would help its members accept and value their sexuality, even when sexual attitudes and orientations differ. The section urges continued attention to sexuality questions.

Another section of the report says various traditions may be a positive renewing force in building a new community of women and men. It warns against Christianity generally dismissing local traditions, especially in the Third World.



THEOLOGIANS REACT TO  
WOMEN/MEN CONSULTATION

Sheffield, UK (EPS) - About 250 delegates, staff, consultants, guests and journalists from more than 50 countries converged on this industrial city in the English midlands for a 10-day consultation on the community of women and men in the church.

They left behind many pages of report and recommendations, especially for the World Council of Churches (WCC) - consultation sponsor - and its nearly 300 member bodies in about 100 countries.

One of those who will have to deal with them is William Lazareth, director of the WCC faith and order sub-unit. For him, the Sheffield message is clear: "Sexism is sin that prompts schism".

"The myth of female inferiority distorts the church's faith and corrupts the church's order", he continued. He added that the consultation "challenged the churches to explore and demonstrate what it means for their worship and witness to be created together equally in Christ's church".

Another WCC staff executive, Bärbel von Wartenberg, director of the section on women in church and society, said Sheffield's results are a mandate to "go on drawing the attention of church women everywhere to the burning issues of social injustice". She added that a post-Sheffield priority for her work is "enabling and strengthening women to participate fully with men in an equal dialogue on the issues raised" by the consultation process.

Among those addressing the gathering was Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie. The Church of England primate said "the church's ministry to women, at least in my own tradition, is often exercised badly and insensitively".

Runcie said he is prepared for the ordination of women at some point in the future. But he worried aloud that a concentration on ordained ministry would devalue other forms of ministry by Christians.

WCC General Secretary Philip Potter called the community study a "test of our faith and of the ecumenical movement". He said it brought home to him the "incredible pain and agony" women suffer in a male dominated church, as well as "the extraordinary love and patient endurance and perseverance which lies behind it".

Potter faulted the "heresy" of dualism in church and society which stereotypically associates women with flesh and men with spirit, women with things private and men with things public, women with meekness and men with power.

German theologians Jürgen and Elisabeth Moltmann asked in a joint presentation if the church is prepared to "take seriously" women "who have been kept in tutelage" and are now "coming of age".

Sri Lanka theologian Tissa Balasuriya linked sex, race, and class oppression. He said all three tend to regard another "not as a free, responsible person or human community, but as an object, a thing to be used for one's pleasure, power or profit".

(more)

Other presenters included USA psychotherapist Jean Baker Miller, French theologian Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, and Cameroon academic Rose Zoé-Obianga. Phyllis Tribble, Old Testament professor at Union Seminary, New York City, was Bible study leader.

In her presentation on the Garden of Eden account in Genesis, she suggested that "rather than legitimating the patriarchal culture from which it comes", it "places that culture under judgment and thus it can function to liberate, not to enslave us".

#### EPS

#### CONSULTATION CONSIDERS GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES IN THEOLOGICAL ED

Toronto (EPS) - How does one give seminary students a global perspective? About 150 participants from 50 North American seminaries wrestled with that and related questions at a four-day World Council of Churches (WCC) consultation here sponsored by its Programme on Theological Education.

"The battle for global solidarity in theological education is fought and won or lost in the teaching of the Bible, in the teaching of church history, of systematic theology, of dogmatics, of pastoral theology. If it is not fought at that level, all that we add in terms of other fancy things will not help very much", said opening plenary speaker José Miguez-Bonino, one of the six WCC presidents.

Theological educators do not lack vision, the Argentinian scholar said, but "the most difficult thing is to translate vision into disciplined, persistent, lucid work so that great themes can really change conditions - otherwise vision can be a form of escape".

Melinda Roper, president of the Maryknoll, N.Y., Roman Catholic women's missionary order, challenged Western theologians to "contribute to the liberation of the Christian tradition so that it may function more freely in emerging global structures, laws and systems".

J. Deotis Roberts, president of Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, stressed that oppression and suffering of minorities past and present are a message about a God of hope rather than one of triumphal success.

"Theological students I meet are not asking whether God exists, but whether God cares", he said. "Seminaries must be prepared to buck the system where governments scrap social welfare programs and where so-called moral majorities preach against lust and embrace greed".

He also called for seminaries to exchange students and faculty. "Exchange between black and white seminaries could be a way of sharing resources to mutual enrichment as well as showing that we take pluralism seriously", he suggested.

The consultation included 12 workgroups on such subjects as racism, peace and disarmament, the world economic order, feminism, the urban situation, and ecumenism and mission.

(more)



A variety of documents and films about El Salvador made up a case study on introducing such an issue and educational technique into a seminary program.

Among the responses to one evening of concentrated attention to that topic was caution against "romanticizing" such a complex and tragic subject or ignoring injustice nearer each seminary's doorstep.

Samuel Proctor, Harlem pastor and education school professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey warned in a keynote sermon against a God who is "more at home in the Pentagon than in a temple of worship". He said a "God of justice and moral integrity above religious and cultural particularism is a prerequisite for global community of depth, durability and a sense of destiny".

The Toronto consultation follows gatherings on the issue since 1977 in Switzerland, the Philippines, and the German Democratic Republic.

EPS

#### ASIA FLOODS FUND APPEAL LAUNCHED

Geneva (EPS) - In the wake of major flood damage in India, an appeal for financial contributions to an Asia Floods Fund has been made here by a World Council of Churches (WCC) agency.

The WCC Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service, estimates that US\$ 500,00 will be necessary from the fund by the end of the annual Asian monsoon season this fall.

A commission staff report on the India situation estimates flooding left perhaps three million people homeless in all states of north India by the latter part of July. At that time, more than 300 were dead.

By mid-July, US\$ 100,000 from the fund was sent to the Churches Auxiliary for Social Action in India to help meet needs for clothing, feeding, shelter, and medical assistance. Further aid requests were expected as relief operations expanded.

EPS

CHURCH MATERIAL AID  
FIGURES ANNOUNCED

Geneva (EPS) - Material aid shipments by 17 national church agencies in 12 countries and the World Council of Churches Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service totalled US\$ 76.4 million last year. The previous year's figure was US\$ 53.0 million.

In 1980, most of the aid went to Africa (US\$ 34.1 million), Asia (24.8) and Latin America (10.9). Three countries received more than US\$ 5 million each - Kampuchea (10.6), India (8.7) and Tanzania (6.7).

More than half the aid shipped in terms of dollar value was either food (31.3 percent) or health or medical supplies or equipment (26.9 percent).

Besides CICARWS, agencies covered in the report include United Church of Canada, Danchurchaid (Denmark), Brot für die Welt (German Democratic Republic), Dutch Inter-Church Aid, Church World Service (New Zealand), Norchurchaid (Norway), HEKS (Switzerland), Christian Aid (UK), American Friends Service Committee (USA), Church World Service (USA), Lutheran World Relief (USA), Mennonite Central Committee (USA), Swedish National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, Finnish National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation, German Institute for Medical Mission (Federal Republic of Germany), Procurement Office for German Mission Societies (FRG), and Diakonisches Werk (FRG).

The report was released by Helmut Reuschle, CICARWS material aid secretary.

EPS

LEBANON YWCA  
IN PEACE CALL

Geneva (EPS) - The YWCA of Lebanon has appealed for an end to financial backing for various militias in the country and for other countries to "stop meddling in the internal affairs of Lebanon".

Its appeal was released by the World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) here.

The Lebanese appeal also urges that "help be given to legal authorities to regain control of the country so that Lebanon can live again as a free democracy", and that others "join us in prayer for peace".

The YWCA call says that "as a result of the continuing violence Lebanon is living in chaos. The law courts are still inactive and the economy seriously damaged.

"But worse than that", it continues, "will be the traumatization and devitalization of the Lebanese people if the crisis continues ... High inflation is triggering other social conditions, one of them the disappearance of the middle class...

"Youth are losing interest in life", it adds, "turning to drugs for comfort, since many schools are closed. Many join the militias for lack of jobs or choose to leave the country... The future of Lebanon is very dim."

EPS



ECUBITS: News from the Oikoumene

(from secular and church sources)

A meeting of 36 African Anglican theologians recommended that polygamous men not be forced to divorce any of their wives before being communioned. Urging pastoral sensitivity in areas where polygamy is widely accepted, the theologians also affirmed monogamy as God's ideal for husband-wife relationships.

The Roman Catholic bishops of Nicaragua have decided four priests may keep their jobs in the Sandanista government - foreign minister Miguel d'Escoto, culture minister Ernesto Cardenal, social welfare minister Edgar Parrales, and youth leader Fernando Cardenal. They are not, however, to function as priests while in those posts.

Congregations of the (Lutheran) Church of Norway are now free to commune baptized children as young as six. Since 1968 the lower age limit has been 12. Karl Gerwin, secretary of the church's liturgy commission said some priests want to commune even baptized infants, but the bishops would not sanction this.

Two US Reformed denominations debated the role of women in church office at their national meetings. The General Synod of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church voted 136-101 not to consider whether to ordain women. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church postponed a definitive stand on whether women may be deacons. The 1978 meeting said they could, but following protests, the 1979 synod voted to suspend implementation pending further study. Unable to agree on what to do about the results of the study, the 1981 synod voted for a new study committee to report in 1983.

The Roman Catholic bishops of Kenya have urged the government of that country to improve religious education standards ... In Ghana, the national teachers association is calling on that government to reintroduce religious education in all schools.

The USA National Association of Evangelicals has announced a nationwide "Save the Family" campaign for 1982. It is to be preceded by a national mail and advertising effort this fall.

The 30th Finnish Church Days concentrated on racial discrimination. A statement cited problems of Gypsies and Lapps in Finland and "hostility towards foreigners, especially those with dark skins" which, it said, "has also been increasing in recent years".

The board of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has expressed reservations about a recent proposal from the Finnish labour ministry. It would allow alternative service in parishes for those objecting to compulsory military duty. The church, the board said, should be able to "examine the suitability of each individual" for parish work.

(more)

The foreign affairs committee of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the country's ecumenical council have jointly urged the South African government to restore the passport of Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu, chair of the South African Council of Churches.

The social action commission of the Peru Roman Catholic bishops and the church primate have charged the government with torturing prisoners accused of left-wing political activity. The government dismisses the charges as rumours.

Two New Zealand bishops - one Roman Catholic, the other Anglican - joined in a civil court effort to block the controversial visit to the country by a rugby team from white-minority-ruled South Africa. It failed, and the team began its tour in mid-July.

An estimated one African in eight is Roman Catholic according to figures from the Roman Catholic information agency Fides. Its report of population in 54 African countries counts 56.7 million Roman Catholics in a population of about 456 million.

General secretaries of east and central African national Bible societies held a one-week workshop in Nairobi and urged measures to do away with dependence on foreign sources of funds. They called instead for African "self-reliance for present and future church development".

The recent halving of the exchange rate by the Somalia central bank is threatening international relief aid to refugees there, Africa Press Service reports. Overseas currencies now buy half of what they did before the action, designed to relieve the country's difficult economic situation.

The Roman Catholic Church of Kenya has endorsed closer ties with the government information ministry as a major part of its new communications strategy.

Australian Lutherans and Anglicans have okayed an agreed statement on baptism, each affirming baptisms performed under the auspices of the other.

Patriarch Pimen, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, says the church's bishops and other clergy fully support the recent appeal by the Soviet parliament for early talks on limiting nuclear arms. He offered to host a world conference of religious leaders to discuss ways to save humanity from nuclear destruction.

Fifty years of official communion between Anglicans and Old Catholics, formalized by the Bonn Agreement of 1931, were celebrated in several places this summer, including a golden jubilee eucharist in Westminster Abbey concelebrated by the heads of the two communions, Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie and Archbishop of Utrecht Marinus Kok.

Soviet scientists say relics of three Russian saints are really bones of 14th century Mongol invaders. Their findings are to be included in a new atheism museum in Suzdal.



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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 13 AUGUST 1981

\* PLEASE NOTE EMBARGO

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AT 04.30 GMT, MONDAY, 10 AUGUST 1981

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT  
URGED FOR ABORIGINES

Sydney (EPS) - A five-member visitation team from the World Council of Churches (WCC) says "only international solidarity can bring the necessary pressure" to improve the situation of Australia's Aborigines.

The group's 96-page report on its 17-day visit in June and July at the request of the Australian Council of Churches (ACC) was released here 10 August.

Most of its criticism focuses on Queensland and Western Australia, two of five Australian states in which the group visited Aboriginal communities. The two, it says, "have consistently acted in hostile and racist ways to prevent Aborigines from gaining lands or any measure of self determination".

It also urges the Australian federal government to "use its constitutional powers to bring the delinquent states into line... and to insure that land rights legislation is enacted in order to secure justice and equality for Aboriginal Australians".

In 1967, Australians voted overwhelmingly to give federal authorities responsibility for Aboriginal affairs.

Calling "land rights and self determination... two of the basic issues of self identity" the report says Aborigines are "invisible, unseen, and unheard" in Australia, where they are about one percent of the population of approximately 15 million.

It calls Aborigines' "struggle to survive as a people... not only... political and economic" but also one with a "deeply religious dimension". There is, it adds, a "massive gulf" between most white Australian Christians and Aborigines. It calls for "more boldly prophetic words and tangible sacrificial deeds if the gospel is to have credibility in Australia".

The report cites official statistics reflecting Aboriginal problems -- an average life span of 52 years, 20 fewer than for whites; three of eight in the Aboriginal workforce unemployed; in the 200 years since the white arrival, only six Aboriginal lawyers and no medical doctors or dentists trained.

The visitation team was led by Anwar Barkat, head of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism. Other members came from UK, GDR, Zaire, and Costa Rica. Their report suggests churches draw attention to the Aboriginal situation when heads of Commonwealth governments meet in Melbourne beginning 30 September.

EPS



DIALOGUE GUIDELINES: NO  
'COERCIVE PROSYLETISM'

Geneva (EPS) - The international Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People (CCJP) has unanimously approved Jewish-Christian dialogue guidelines which reject "coercive proselytism", that is, "whatever violates the right of the human person to be free from external coercion in religious matters".

The CCJP is an agency of the World Council of Churches, headquartered here. The guidelines were released in August after being discussed and approved at a consultation meeting in London at the end of June.

"Christians are called to witness to their faith in word and deed", the guidelines affirm. "The church has a mission and it cannot be otherwise".

But, they continue, "Christians have often distorted their witness by coercive proselytism". They call "steps towards assuring non-coercive practices... of highest importance".

Beyond the rejection of coercion, however, the guidelines note Christian disagreement on "what constitutes authentic forms of witness", towards non-Christians in general and Jews in particular.

The document urges Christians to "face honestly the tragic history of antisemitism" and "to fight antisemitism with all the resources at their disposal, the more so since there are disturbing signs of new and increased antisemitism in many parts of the world...".

"The church must learn", the guidelines add, "so to preach and teach the gospel as to make sure that it cannot be used against the Jewish people".

In a section on "the land", the guidelines say "the need for the state of Israel to exist in security and peace... is of paramount importance in any dialogue with Jews". They urge Christians in such dialogue to "also recognize the need of Palestinians for self-determination and expression of their national identity".

The document notes that "many Christians find it difficult to grasp this essential nature of the Jewish attachment" to the "land of the fathers and the land of promise". It asks Christians to "examine their theology and the history of their own faith on this point in any dialogue with Jews concerning the meaning of the land".

The guidelines call it a "short... step from Christian theologies in which Judaism play a "negative role" to "overt acts of condescension, persecutions, and worse". They urge "Christians to listen... to ways in which Jews understand their history and their traditions... 'in their own terms'".

Consultation moderator is Krister Stendahl, professor and former dean at Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Mass., USA. Other consultants came from France, Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Soviet Union, USA, Canada, Argentina, India, and Israel (including two Arab Christian ordained ministers). Jewish and Roman Catholic observers were also present.

EPS

NOTE: Copies of the guidelines are available from the WCC Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies sub-unit.

KENYA PRESIDENT OPENS  
AFRICA CHURCH ASSEMBLY

Nairobi (EPS) - Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi urged representatives of more than 100 African denominations from about 40 countries to avoid internal disagreements and to be more flexible in dealing with current problems.

Moi spoke at the opening of the fourth general assembly (3-12 August) of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) based here.

"The church is still weakened, in its overall task and impact, by a number of divisions and a catalogue of different labels in many parts of Africa", he said. "We have seen struggles, differences and jealousies within churches that could not fail to result in diminished pastoral influence".

Citing the church's "disciplined structures" and narrow but powerful place in the social order in the past, Moi said "today it seems that the churches must be more flexible, applying less devotion to structures than to their association with and service to the people".

The Kenyan president commended church efforts to aid the continent's five million refugees, voiced concern about a decline in the morality of African young people, and condemned white-minority rule in South Africa.

Besides opening the assembly, Moi agreed to preside over a drive for funds to complete the AACC headquarters.

Before the assembly began, nearly 100 women took part in a special three-day consultation on such issues as women and human rights and church traditions, rural women, and female participation in nation- and church-building.

Participants urged churches, governments and other bodies to discourage and ignore "forces" which continue to regard women as "weak beings".

Theme of the assembly was "Following the Light of Jesus Christ", with an emphasis on healing in African churches and nations. Among topics on the agenda were refugees, militarism, food and development, urbanization and unemployment, human rights, evangelism and ecumenism, wealth and social morality, reconstructions and rehabilitation, women, youth, and southern Africa.

Previous AACC assemblies were in Kampala (1963), Abidjan (1969), and Lusaka (1974).

An advance report on the assembly from All Africa Press Service noted that the healing emphasis also applied to the AACC itself, without an executive head for three years until the installation last January of Maxime Rafransoa of Madagascar as AACC general secretary. In the interim, staff and programmes were cut considerably.

The AACC secretariat proposed several areas of commitment to the assembly including consultancy and advisory services for member denominations, visitation and exchange programs, national and regional workshops, and interpretation of the African church situation to overseas ecumenical partners.



CONSULTATION: NO 'NEVER'  
TO AFRICAN NUCLEAR ENERGY

Jos, Nigeria (EPS) - A conference on the African context of questions of faith, science, and the future, has called a "universal moratorium on nuclear energy" in Africa "unfair and unrealistic".

The meeting here with a group of African scientists was under the auspices of a World Council of Churches (WCC) church and society working committee.

The consultation's four reports deal with energy, science education, science and technology as power, and the African context of faith and science.

The energy report observes that "our countries should endeavour to develop local sources of energy rather than committing themselves to complex and expensive technologies such as nuclear energy, which... only furthers their dependence on highly industrialized countries".

However, it continues, "there are... some countries where nuclear energy might already be the only viable option for large-scale generation of energy". It adds that "in view of the fact that South Africa has already acquired nuclear technology, it is politically unacceptable, for some African countries, not to go ahead with their own development of nuclear technology".

In August 1980, the WCC Central Committee called for a five-year moratorium on nuclear power plant construction.

Speaking of energy development in general, the report says it "cannot emphasize strongly enough" that "the top priority is the improvement of the living conditions for the poor.

"Decisions about energy are finally political and economic decisions and... must reckon with the needs of the poor. This means," it adds, "an explicit commitment to their cause, by governments, by churches and by individuals".

Other reports from the group speak of both benefits and negative results of science and technology. The call for a discriminating appreciation and application of both "traditional knowledge and experience" and "new scientific knowledge".

EPS

ANGLICANS, ORTHODOX HOLD  
ANNUAL DOCTRINAL TALKS

Chambesy, Geneva (EPS) - The annual meeting of the international Anglican/ (Eastern) Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Commission considered the church, the triune God, and tradition during its week of sessions 20-27 July, at the Orthodox conference centre in this Geneva suburb.

A communiqué after the meeting described the unity of the church as taking "concrete form as the church, gathered round the bishop in the common celebration of the holy eucharist..."

Regarding the Christian doctrine of a triune God, the communiqué says a sub-commission strongly emphasized that "at the heart of the Christian life there lies a personal experience of God, who reveals himself in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit".

The report adds that "we must not understand doctrinal formulae in any way which detracts from the mystery of God... handed down in the church from the apostles" by the theologians of the first Christian centuries .

On the controverted subject of whether Christians should confess that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father" or "from the Father and the Son" (the filioque clause used by Anglicans and most western Christians in the Nicene Creed, a 4th-century statement of Christian belief), the communiqué says "Anglicans expressed their appreciation for the Orthodox exposition ... and the new perspective this gave on the doctrinal reasons why the filioque has no place in the creed".

As for church tradition, the communiqué says "within the freedom of the Anglican Communion there is a commitment and responsibility to tradition" and among Orthodox "there exist freedom and understanding of tradition as the constant action of the Holy Spirit in the church".

The group meets next in Canterbury 12-19 July 1982 to continue discussions on the three topics and hear papers on apostolicity of the church, Christian holiness, and Christian worship. The 38-person commission is co-chaired by Canadian Anglican Bishop Henry Hill and British Eastern Orthodox Archbishop Methodius.

EPS



WORLD METHODISTS  
MEET IN HONOLULU

Honolulu (EPS) - John Wesley might not have recognized the setting but he would have felt right at home with the heart-warming fellowship and the concern for the faith and future of peoples everywhere when more than 3,000 of his spiritual descendents from all parts of the globe gathered here (21-28 July) for the 14th World Methodist Conference.

The Pacific setting, the first ever in 100 years of such meetings, with its plethora of cultures and scenery, underscored both the reach of the Wesleyan movement and the extent of its interests.

By the time a final aloha was said, delegates from about 65 countries endorsed enthusiastically continuing the evangelism programme launched in 1971, voiced solidarity with the poor, hungry and oppressed, called on the 63 member bodies of the World Methodist Council to enter fully into the field of television, urged further theological dialogue with Roman Catholics and Lutherans, and installed leaders for the next five years.

In a series of resolutions, unprecedented in both number and scope for such a gathering. The WMC condemned white-minority-ruled South Africa for its policy of racial separation, supported independence for Namibia, denounced USA activities in El Salvador, scored superpower arms and activities in the Middle East and called on member churches to see that women and men are treated equally.

Leticia Ramos Shahani, a United Nations assistant secretary-general in Vienna and a member of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, sounded a note that was picked up by a number of speakers. She said underdevelopment that affects so many people in Third World countries poses a far greater danger to peace than the arms race.

A concluding open-air rally came after a 1.5 km march by the 3,000 Methodists along the streets of Waikiki, a witness not often seen in that pleasure-seeking area.

South African church leader Abel Hendricks and London street preacher Donald Soper received the WMC peace award. Elected to succeed British Methodist leader Kenneth Greet as WMC chair was William Cannon, a USA bishop in the United Methodist Church.

- Robert Lear\*

\*Robert Lear is a United Methodist communication officer based in Evanston (Illinois) USA.

EPS

POLISH AID BY CHURCHES  
 PASSES US\$ 1 MILLION

Geneva (EPS) - The total cost of food and medicines shipped to Poland under the auspices of the German Diakonisches Werk agency was expected to be about US\$ 1.1 million by the end of August.

The aid programme was begun last December by DW on behalf of the World Council of Churches (WCC) inter-church aid commission (CICARWS) in cooperation with the Lutheran World Federation.

Main recipients of the aid shipments have been the Polish Ecumenical Council, the Evangelical Church of Augsburg Confession in Poland, and the government health ministry.

In a late July Polish situation report, CICARWS Europe secretary Uffe Gjerding and material aid secretary Helmut Reuschle anticipate a "most difficult period" in the "coming winter season". They urge "continued assistance and expression of solidarity by the ecumenical fellowship".

Besides CICARWS and DW units, contributions for the Polish aid effort have been received from several Federal German territorial churches and church institutions, and church sources in Austria, Sweden, Norway, Holland and Denmark.

EPS

WORLD LUTHERAN PRESIDENT  
 URGES COMBATTING PAGANISM

Turku, Finland (EPS) - The president of the Lutheran World Federation says millions of pagans need evangelization -- not least in "so-called Christian countries" of Europe and North America.

Josiah Kibira, a bishop in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania, spoke here to the annual meeting of the LWF Executive Committee. "Millions of people", he said, "are simply modern, learned and sophisticated pagans, to put it bluntly".

He also said he detects increasing "conservatism and paternalism... among some mission-related groups".

Also addressing the committee, LWF general secretary Carl Mau said Lutherans understand themselves as a movement for renewal and unity within the church catholic, but are cautious about world structures exercising authority over local churches.

In his address he reviewed several world Lutheran ecumenical relationships. Referring to what an LWF report called "problems" between the LWF and the World Council of Churches, both based in the same building in Geneva, Mau said a frank consultation between representatives of the two organizations last May made it clear that both have "important but differing complementary tasks". He said several avenues are being opened to develop closer relationships and intensify further cooperation between the two organizations.

EPS



ECUBITS: News in Brief from the Oikoumene  
(compiled from church and secular sources)

The boyhood denomination of USA President Ronald Reagan has urged his administration to stop deporting refugees from El Salvador. Delegates to the assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) urged an investigation of alleged abuse of such refugees by USA immigration authorities. Delegates also endorsed efforts to oppose baby-formula marketing in the Third World and to boycott Nestlé, the largest company doing it.

The South African Council of Churches has announced that the detention by the government of Sol Jacob, director of the SACC mission and evangelism division, will not deter its work among South African refugees in neighbouring countries, which he was involved in. The SACC executive committee said a delegation of church leaders would attempt to meet with the South African police minister to discuss the Jacob case. He is being held under a section of the country's internal security act which prohibits contact by his family or attorneys.

The two largest USA Presbyterian denominations have announced a plan to reunite. They split at the time of that country's civil war 120 years ago. The plan needs approval next June by the two groups' national assemblies, and by two-thirds or three-fourths of their respective presbyteries (regional units) by the following February. The new denomination would be known as the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Four USA church leaders have urged their government to deal directly with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in pursuing Middle East peace efforts. Three separate statements to that effect came during July from J. Richard Butler, head of the National Council of Churches Middle East and Europe office; William P. Thompson, stated clerk of the United Presbyterian Church; and (jointly) Avery Post, president of the United Church of Christ, and Kenneth Teegarden, president and general minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Commercial "sex tours" have been on the agenda of several religious meetings in recent weeks. Condemnation of the practice came from the World Council of Churches consultation on the community of women and men in the church, in Sheffield, UK. In Hawaii, the assembly of the World Federation of Methodist Women heard a Philippine foundation director highlight the growing popularity of such tours in Asia. And in Tokyo, the executive committee of the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan) urged its moderator to issue a statement of concern and set up a special committee on the issue.

The moderator of the Kyodan (United Church of Christ in Japan) says he fears Japan "is again taking steps toward war". A statement by Ushiroku Toshio, endorsed by the Kyodan executive committee 17-5, says that "in the name of national defense, our government is implementing its policies by clever manipulation of public opinion..."

(more)

The Roman Catholic archbishop of Seattle, Washington, USA, has called for "unilateral disarmament with trust and reliance on the Lord as security" as the "only... moral position" in the wake of "failure to achieve mutual disarmament". His area is a centre of the USA arms industry.

Julius Nyerere, president of Tanzania, told a gathering of more than 500 Lutheran pastors that any act barring religious activities deprives people of their humanness. He said that in Tanzania "everybody is free to believe in any religion, provided this belief does not go against the country's laws".

A report by the ecumenical commission for Italian Waldensians and Methodists says Roman Catholic emphasis on bilateral dialogues hinders ecumenical progress, as it "breaks down the unity of confessional and non-Roman churches". The report also describes Pope John Paul II as "in continual ecumenical movement but unmovable in his positions".

The Roman Catholic Church in China -- independent of Vatican direction since 1957 -- has consecrated five new bishops. Chinese television filmed the traditional three-hour liturgy, conducted in Latin and Chinese, in Peking's Immaculate Conception cathedral. After the last episcopal consecration under the auspices of the Patriotic Catholic Association, in December 1979, the pope expressed "deep grief". The latest consecration came within weeks after the Vatican named Dominic Tang a provincial archbishop. He had been bishop of Canton, from which post he was removed by the Chinese church after accepting the Vatican appointment.

A week-long international youth consultation (24-31 July) sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation has recommended that a quarter of the delegates to the next LWF assembly, in Budapest in 1984, be youth (defined as usually under 30). The youth at the consultation, from 40 LWF member bodies, also urged creation of an LWF youth desk and the addition of a youth member to the LWF executive committee and the four LWF commissions.

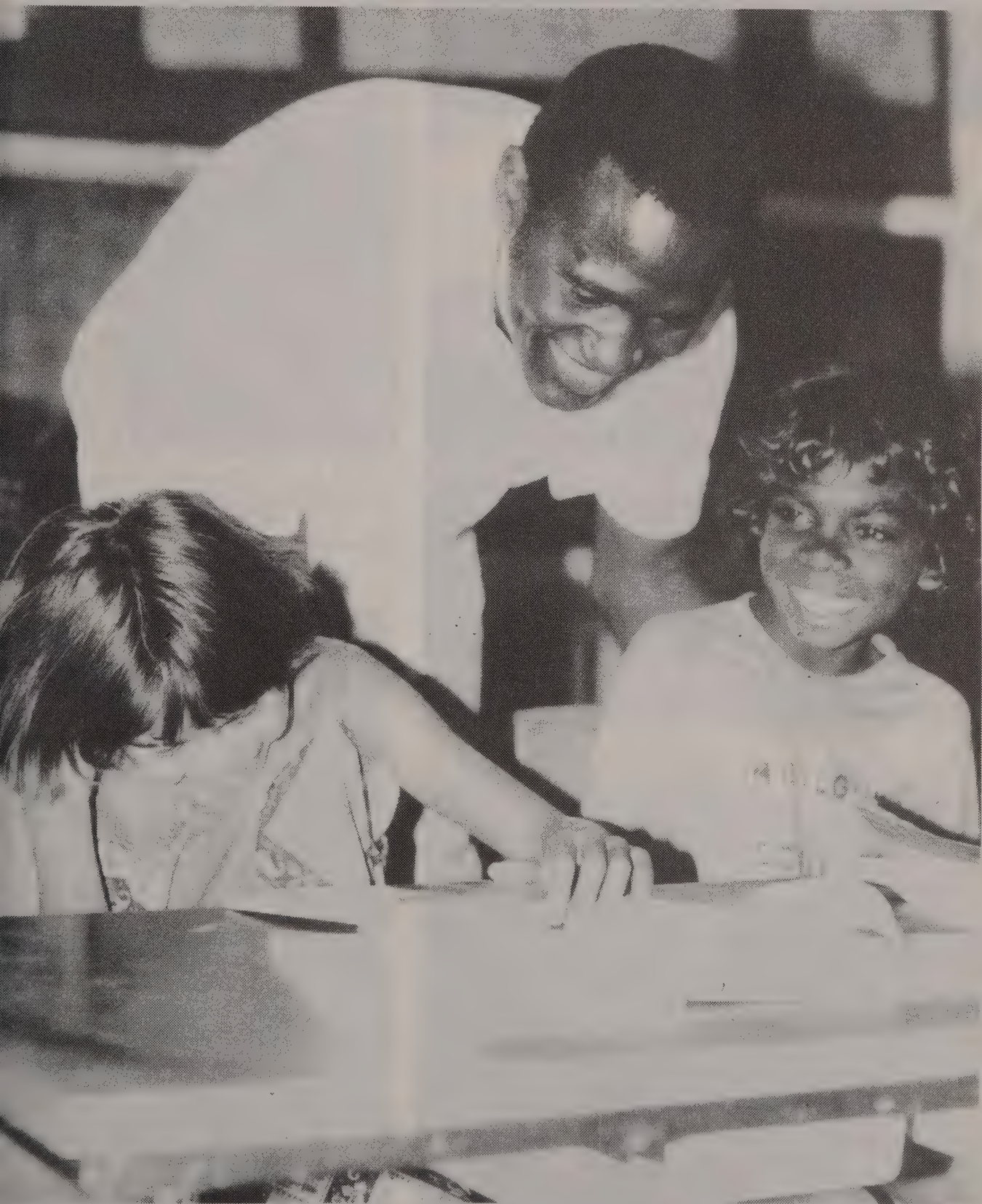
Two Scottish church leaders are among dozens of UK politicians, academics, and religious figures who signed a full page ad in the Times of London criticizing USA foreign policy. The ad, whose signers include A.M. Haggart, primus and bishop of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church, and Lord Maclead of Fuinary, past moderator of the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, says USA concern about "containment of communism" has led it to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

The general secretary of the British Council of Churches has issued statements opposing the current rugby tour to New Zealand by a team from South Africa, and calling on the Ethiopian government to release information about the whereabouts of Gudina Tumsa, general secretary of the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church Mekane Yesus. He was abducted by persons unknown 28 July 1979. His wife has been detained by the government since February 1980



AUGUST 1981

No 21





## CHURCH REPS VISIT ABORIGI



(2659)



(2660)



(2661)

The report of a team from the World Council of Churches which examined conditions of Australian Aborigines is due for release this month. During a three-week visit which ended last month, the five team members, who came at the request of the Australian Council of Churches, said they were shocked by Aboriginal poverty. Team member Bena-Silu of Zaire visited an Aboriginal school (cover). Anwar Barakat of Pakistan (right), director of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism, learned from a patient about an Aboriginal medical centre (2659). In the same community, children played on abandoned cars (2660), and one held his granddaughter (2661). Gary Stansfield, chair of the ACC Aboriginal advisory committee, spoke to the press in Melbourne as team member Elisabeth Adler of the German Democratic Republic listened (2662). Some of the team's stops were at very remote communities (2663). Wherever they went, team members heard from Aboriginal leaders about the local situation (2664 & 2665). In northwest Australia, team members found Aborigines living in a makeshift camp (2666). In another community, in the north central part of the country, an Aboriginal worker took a break from work in an Aboriginal slaughterhouse (2667).

Photos: Russell Rollason/ACC







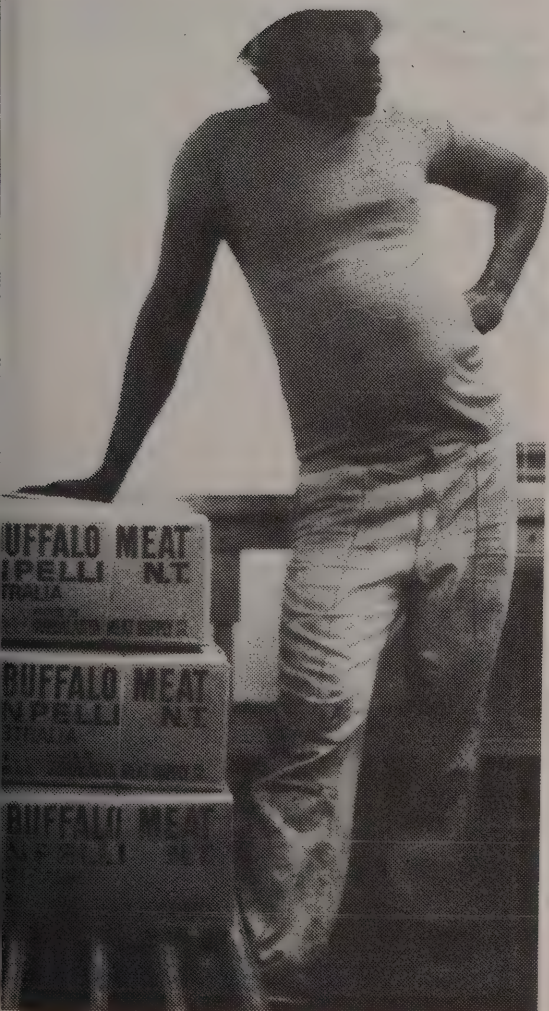
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13 August 1981

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 27 AUGUST 1981



WCC CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OPENS IN DRESDEN, GDR

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) -- which governs the worldwide ecumenical organization between WCC Assemblies -- was to begin its 11-day meeting here with an opening worship service in the Kreuzkirche, Sunday evening 16 August.

The meeting is the first of the whole committee in Eastern Europe in 25 years. Its 1956 meeting was in Hungary; in 1974 its executive committee met in the GDR.

More than 500 people from around the world were expected to gather here in connection with the meeting, including approximately 140 members of the committee, a like number of advisers, observers, and guests, and about 100 members of the Geneva-based council staff, including those providing translation and interpretation in the meeting's five working languages (English, French, Spanish, German and Russian).

Also expected were 100-120 press representatives and dozens of stewards, young people assisting with day-to-day arrangements and operations.

Major items on the agenda include decisions about the next WCC Assembly, in 1983 in Vancouver (British Columbia) Canada; action on the many recommendations and reports from the WCC's consultation last month in Sheffield, UK, on the community of women and men in the church; and a proposed statement on the world refugee situation.

Also highlighted in the plenary sessions are the work of the WCC Christian Medical Commission, the International Year of the Disabled, and the life and witness of the church in the GDR.

Reports from WCC General Secretary Philip Potter and Central Committee Moderator Ted Scott (Anglican primate of Canada) were scheduled for the committee's first work day, Monday 17 August. Also to come then were greetings on behalf of the GDR churches by Albrecht Schönherr (bishop of the Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg and president of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR) and Johannes Hempel (bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, based here). Klaus Gysi, GDR state secretary for religious affairs, was also scheduled to bring greetings.

In a joint letter last month to committee participants, Schönherr and Hempel said GDR Christians "eagerly look forward to your coming among us".

They added that the eight regional churches which make up the federation "are learning to see their present situation, in which congregations are shrinking, as a new call to missionary witness and service". About half the GDR population of 17 million is counted as church members.

The WCC includes about 300 member bodies in more than 100 countries. Traditions represented include Old Catholic, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist, Reformed, Methodist, Anglican, Pentecostal, Moravian, United, Campbellite, and Quaker.

EPS

NOTE: From 15-27 August, EPS staff are available at the Central Committee press centre: phone : 37 (GDR) 51 (Dresden) 496.238  
telex : 2 - 6049 za oerk

YMCA COUNCIL LOOKS AT  
FIVE WORLD ISSUES

Estes Park (Colorado) USA (EPS) - Five world issues -- peace, poverty, human rights, social and political pressures, and the search for community -- were a major part of the nine-day meeting (18-26 July) here, of the council of the World Alliance of YMCAs.

The approximately 850 staff and volunteer leaders from 78 countries heard major presentations on the concerns. They also approved recommendations urging, among other things, that the 23 million YMCA members work to affect government policies related to the five subjects.

Scottish teacher and writer James Love was elected alliance president. Also voted was a 16-member commission to study the role, function, and structure of the alliance, and suggest possible changes to the next council meeting, in 1985.

In his address on poverty, Raymond Fung, executive secretary for mission of the Hong Kong Christian Council, proposed as a "minimum condition which makes human life worthwhile... a family eating together... If you have rice and you have community, you are not poor".

Derived from that, Fung said, is a way to judge actions and proposals: "Whichever actions, policies, governments and systems which enable the largest number of families to eat together is good, and whichever prevents families from eating together, is bad."

Fung added that both material and spiritual poverty need combatting, but suggested the second is a copy of the first. "Too often", he said, "there is the spiritually poor with plenty of food telling those without food that food is not important ... It seems to me the height of folly and silliness for the copy to dismiss the original".

In an address on "the search for community", William Sloane Coffin Jr., senior minister of the Riverside Church in New York City, called for "full equality" of men and women, and of homosexuals and heterosexuals. "Clearly, he said, "it is not Scripture that creates hostility to homosexuality, but rather hostility to homosexuality that prompts certain Christians to retain a few passages from an otherwise largely discarded law code...

"I don't see how", he continued, "Christians can centrally define and then exclude people on the basis of sexual orientation alone -- not if the law of love is so much more important than the laws of biology".

Speaking of another aspect of community, Coffin said it "demands that the economic democracies of the world achieve a far greater degree of political freedom, and that the political democracies -- notably the United States -- attain a far higher standard of social justice".

In an address "toward a theology of peace", Alan Geyer, executive director of the Churches' Centre for Theology and Public Policy, Washington, included "a word that too many Christians never want to hear: a theology of peace must be grounded in theology of politics".

Other major presenters included Lucille Mair, a New York-based special advisor to UNICEF, Argentine Methodist minister Aldo Etchegoyen, and Reinhard Slenczka, professor of systematic theology at the University of Heidelberg.



1980s PROPHETIC MINISTRY  
URGED FOR AFRICAN CHURCH

Nairobi (EPS) - General Secretary Maxime Rafransoa of the All Africa Conference of Churches says the African church should make prophetic ministry its commitment for the 1980s.

In an address to the AACC Fourth Assembly, here (3-12 August), Rafransoa said the "cries of our oppressed women, of our unemployed and sometimes slaughtered young people, arise to God like the cry of Abel's blood".

Referring to AACC organizational and financial difficulties in recent years, Rafransoa called them a "growth crisis, too rapid a growth -- like a teenager that grows too quickly and makes his clothes burst at the seams".

He suggested AACC planning and programming better geared to what African churches can do, and offered the view that the AACC organization was too elitist in framework to reflect needs of the rural poor.

Rafransoa called for vigilance against exploitation of the continent by banks, corporations, technologies, and cultural systems.

He lamented dictatorial governments and the increasing numbers of African refugees. He urged African theologians to "be simple in order to be understood and to be able to understand", to be "born again like Nicodemus ... congenial to women and children as Jesus was".

In another address, John Gatu, chair of the AACC General Committee, said the organization must respond to critics who suggest that it "does not speak for the member churches nor ... represent the views of the churches in its pronouncements".

Those critical of the AACC political stance on some issues should be told, Gatu said, "that the gospel of Jesus Christ does not recognize the separation between politics and religion per se. Our commission would not be fulfilled if we did not deal with all matters that pertain to the life of our people in this continent".

Gatu also voiced concern about the increasing number of small Christian groups springing up, often with impetus from outside Africa. He said such groups harm efforts at common witness.

He also reflected on the failure of various church union efforts. "In a number of cases even a day has been set for such union, only to be thwarted later by a number of reasons and excuses", he said.

(Previous story: EPS No.21-6 August 1981, page 4).

'PRACTICAL STEPS' ASKED  
IN LUTHERAN-RC RELATIONS

Turku, Finland (EPS) - The Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has called on LWF member churches and Roman Catholic leaders to consider "practical steps" to implement conclusions reached in various official theological dialogues.

Meeting here, the committee unanimously adopted a five-page statement designed to further "reception" of the dialogue results by Lutherans and Roman Catholics around the world.

In summarizing results of various dialogues, the LWF committee said they have deepened an awareness of what the two traditions have in common and has also "allowed the recognition that many differences are not church dividing but rather present legitimate diversity".

On another ecumenical matter, the new associate director of the LWF studies department said a survey of LWF member bodies indicates support for a "more profiled Lutheran participation in the World Council of Churches" by the LWF.

WCC Deputy General Secretary Todor Sabev, in greetings to the committee, thanked the LWF for its "notable part in fostering Christian unity and contributing to the main purposes of the WCC". He called the WCC and organisations of the various Christian world communions "partners with distinctive tasks in an integrated whole".

During a debate on statements about East-West peace issues, LWF Vice President David Preus, presiding bishop of the American Lutheran Church, called for "even-handedness" and "mutual openness and honesty" in such church pronouncements.

Criticizing language in an LWF departmental report, Preus said that while avoiding "the danger of cold-war rhetoric", churches "especially have a responsibility to insist on... even-handedness" when speaking about such issues as the military strategies of East and West, arms expenditures, human rights records, and propaganda.

The committee approved a theme for the next LWF Assembly, in 1984 in Budapest. It is "In Christ -- Hope for the World".

EPS



RACIST GROUPS SAID  
TO GO INTERNATIONAL

Salisbury, Zimbabwe (EPS) - Members of the commission of the World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism say various national racist groups are internationalizing their operations.

Also, according to PCR director Anwar Barkat, regional reports by the commissioners suggest a picture of "violence against racial minorities as a global phenomenon".

The 15-member commission held its annual meeting, here, its first such in Africa, last month (13-24 July).

In the years prior to Zimbabwe's independence with a black-majority government, PCR grants to groups struggling against the white-minority government were controversial in some quarters.

As Barkat observed, those whom some considered "terrorists are now the policy-makers and leaders of Zimbabwe". He reported that during several days of the group's exposure to the life of the church in Zimbabwe, expressions of thanks for the PCR aid were common. Commission members also met with Zimbabwe government officials, including the president.

Barkat said a "more coordinated approach" is needed to help develop local church leadership. After "suppression of hundreds of years" and overseas financial control, he said, it has been difficult for Zimbabwe church organizations to be immediately "self-reliant, self-managing".

EPS

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS COMMENT  
ON CHURCH ABORIGINE REPORT

Canberra (EPS) - Federal and state officials had varying reactions to the report on Aborigines released (10 August) by a team from the World Council of Churches (WCC) which spent three weeks in Australia at the request of the Australian Council of Churches (ACC).

Peter Baume, federal minister for Aboriginal affairs, said the WCC report rightly details worst aspects of Aboriginal life, but added the WCC team did not mention more positive aspects of federal policy towards the one percent of the population descended from the continent's first inhabitants.

Baume agreed with the report's view that Aborigines' health, housing, and educational conditions are appalling. "All these things are bad", Baume said. "That's true ... but they are improving". He said a view of "both the blemishes and the achievements" is necessary for a "true picture".

The WCC team report singles out the states of Queensland and Western Australia as particularly repressive and racist toward Aborigines. Both premiers refused to meet with the WCC team.

Queensland Premier John Bjelke-Petersen called the report "a load of rubbish. I won't even read it." Western Australia Premier Charles Court said it is "an unbalanced document which cannot make any useful contribution to the understanding or resolution of the problems".

(Previous stories: EPS No.17, 18 June 1981, page 3; EPS No.18, 25 June, page 2; EPS No.19, 9 July, page 2; EPS No.21, 6 August, page 2).

EPS

CONSULTATION VIEWS ROLE  
OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

Manchester, UK (EPS) - What is the role of the Christian educator in a society made up of people of many faiths? How should Christians in education adjust to increased secularism and urbanisation?

Those were among the questions which preoccupied more than 30 participants from some 15 countries at a weeklong consultation here under the auspices of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Included were people from countries where Christianity is a cultural and religious minority and others from Europe and the Americas, where cultural and religious patterns are generally identified as Christian.

At the end of the days of field trips and lectures, discussions and case studies, participants offered suggestions based on their reflections.

Their "guidelines for Christian participation in education in a multi-faith environment" note that "all education" -- not just religious education -- "involves issues of values and beliefs... The fact that a teacher is a committed member of a faith community can be complementary to and is not necessarily in conflict with his/her capacity as a professional person engaged in objective enquiry".

The document describes "the Christian position in education" as including "an attitude of critical openness to other faiths and ideologies... The risks inherent in openness", it says, "are those of an incarnate faith which knows that participation in human life entails vulnerability and weakness and a share in human ambiguity".

Even if located in a mostly Christian society, the guidelines say, a Christian school "should still respond to the religious and ideological pluralism of the whole of God's world, and should provide appropriate courses".

The guidelines call for close and critical examination of resources with an "awareness of stereotypes and unconscious prejudices". They commend "person centred" rather than "teacher centred" educational approaches.

Urging a concern for justice in education which "aims to help the individual to be at one with society", the guidelines say "schools ought not to support the survival of social elites or be permitted to become instruments of social control".

In a section on "ideological system and Christian education", the document urges Christian educators to "clearly understand the implications for people of faith of an ideological system which, in principle, holds that people are fully capable of liberating themselves completely through their own efforts. They should enable their students", it continues, "to clearly recognise the differences between such ideological orientation and religious faith".

EPS

NOTE: Beginning in September, the guidelines are available from either the WCC sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies or from the WCC sub-unit on Education.



ECUVIEW: Comment in the Oikoumene  
"A Visit to the Church in Vietnam"

For historical reasons, a certain difference between the north and the south in most matters is still evident after five years of the reunification of Vietnam. This is reflected also in the attitudes and situations of the churches in the two areas.

There are fewer Christians in the north but their record of participation in the revolution and the war would seem to have given them some standing with the new regime. Some leaders of the church are members of the Fatherland Front ... composed of the so-called mass organisations. Some of the damaged churches were rebuilt by the Front ten years ago. Currently, the WCC has pledged support for a US\$ 1.3 million programme for church reconstruction.

We were often reminded that the constitution provides for the freedom of worship and creed. The vice-president of the Religious Committee of Haiphong said that places of worship should be respected and protected, and that since the church reconstruction programme was conducive to this, they welcome the help of the WCC...

It was said that in the south there is actually a surplus of trained pastors while there is some shortage in the north. The state was reported to be willing to permit the reopening of.... seminaries provided a 'popular' faculty and students who were 'good citizens' could be found for them.

Though there seems to be a desire for the reunification of the church, progress seems to be slow.

Christians are found in much larger numbers in the south, especially Roman Catholics. The latter are much in evidence around Ho Chi Minh City. On a section of the road northwards to Dalat, there are four or five large, modern church buildings within 500 metres of one another. The churches seemed to be open on Sundays and weekdays...

However, because of its role during the war with the Americans and during the previous regime, the church in the south, we felt, continues to be suspect with the state....

It was felt that theological training could no longer, as in the past, be divorced from the state and the society in which the church is situated...

It should be obvious that the most important and difficult theological and practical questions arise for the church in its relation to the state. The need to maintain standing with the state and rehabilitate itself with the state, both have dangers for the faithful witness and service of the churches in Vietnam. They need the support, understanding and prayers of the world church as they try to cope with their situation.

- G.R. Karat -

G.R. Karat, communications secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia, visited Vietnam earlier this year. By mid-July, the WCC Vietnam reconstruction fund had raised about US\$ 400,000 of its 1981 goal of US\$ 660,000.

ECUBITS: News in Brief from the Oikoumene  
(compiled from church and secular sources)

The general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) says the LWF is "troubled by the possible shifts in policy ... of some major western powers -- notably the USA -- with respect to ... South Africa's apartheid policy... and its stalling tactics with respect to the independence of Namibia". Carl Mau was addressing last month's meeting of the World Methodist Conference in Honolulu.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has published an English translation of "Conflict Over the Ecumenical Movement", by Ulrich Duchrow. The former Lutheran World Federation staff member is critical of the LWF role in the ecumenical movement. The book stirred controversy when it was first published in German last year. The English edition includes a foreword by WCC General Secretary Philip Potter.

The Roman Catholic primate of Ireland, Tomas O'Fiaich, has appealed for an end to the fasts to the death by Irish Republic Army prisoners in Maze prison near Belfast. Nine IRA prisoners had died by mid-August since the protests began 1 March. The cardinal archbishop urged the fast's end "not in a spirit of condemnation but in a spirit of compassion". Hunger strikers have rejected previous such appeals by church leaders.

A noted Italian ecumenical figure has died at 72 after a long illness. Mario Sbaffi was president of the Methodist Church of Italy from 1958-74 and president of the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy from 1967-73.

The head of the (Eastern Orthodox) Church of Cyprus, Archbishop Chrysostomos, says Greece should do more to overturn the seven-year occupation of northern Cyprus by Turkish forces. The archbishop spoke in the presence of the Cypriot president, Spyros Kyprianou, and the visiting Greek foreign minister, Constantine Mitsotakis. The ratio of ethnic Greeks to Turks on the island is approximately four to one.

The Christian Peace Conference has condemned USA President Ronald Reagan's decision to produce the neutron bomb. The CPC statement, issued by the official Czechoslovak news agency, said the bomb would not increase USA security and would harm further disarmament negotiations.

Zaire's Roman Catholic bishops have issued an 18-page document faulting "the decadence and misery" in the country. Their statement mentions cases of "kidnapping, arbitrary arrests, settling of scores and even torture". The document urges Zaire's people to "help themselves instead of hiding behind the smokescreen of tribalism and regionalism, offering a disunited front to disruptive forces".



The Roman Catholic bishops of Argentina have called for a "true and stable democracy" including "social justice, a healthy economy and the fair distribution of wealth". They add that a restoration of democracy "implies the need to avoid unjust personal deprivation, arbitrary proscription of groups and parties and political conditions which hinder the free expression of citizens". Also, they say the state of emergency proclaimed in November 1974 "cannot be prolonged indefinitely" and express concern over the "grievous situation of the relatives" of Argentinians who in the last several years have disappeared under suspicious circumstances.

USA anti-semitism has declined in the last 15 years, not so much because people have changed their minds about Jews as that the new generation is generally less prejudiced and more tolerant about lifestyles and beliefs in general. That, at least, is one conclusion from a survey of non-Jewish attitudes toward Jews conducted under the auspices of the American Jewish Committee.

The British Bible Society is seeking more than US\$ 200,000 to help meet a growing demand for Bibles in Poland it was announced in London.

The director of mission and evangelism for the South African Council of Churches (SACC) has been released following 45 days of detention by the government without being able to contact his family or lawyers. Sol Jacob was not charged, but his passport was withdrawn. SACC General Secretary Desmond Tutu said government action against Jacob "is interfering with the work of the church in providing ministry to South African refugees. I protest vehemently against this abuse of government power".

A bomb explosion at a Coptic church in Cairo during a wedding killed three and injured more than 50 according to a report from the Egyptian prosecutor-general. His office blamed the blast on agents of Arab countries opposed to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat.

Church and state authorities in Guatemala offer different descriptions of priests killed by government security forces. The government says a Canadian and a Spaniard who died in a recent clash with government forces were members of the Organization of the People in Arms, a clandestine leftist group. Roman Catholic Bishop Ramiro Pellecer says they were missionaries. Pellecer also says a USA priest was tortured before he was killed in what the government calls a robbery. He also says the early August disappearance of a Jesuit priest is "a political trick".



# Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 3 SEPTEMBER 1981

Under auspices: World Council of Churches · World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations · World Young Women's Association · World Student Christian Federation.

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CHURCH REPS SPEAK  
ON PEACE THREATS

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The governing central committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has issued a statement on threats to peace. Among other things, it calls the neutron bomb "the most recent and obvious example" of "new dehumanizing weapons" and a "tremendous threat because it makes the use of nuclear weapons more likely".

Production and stockpiling of the weapon was announced in early August by the USA government. The bomb would kill persons in its range but do considerably less property damage than other kinds of nuclear blasts.

The central committee statement urges a ban on the neutron bomb "and any other such weapons".

In a resume of other tensions and "disquieting trends" in the past year, the statement notes the "inability, so far, to reach a positive conclusion" to the talks in Madrid on European security and cooperation, the "worsening economic crisis throughout the world" and the "continuing stalemate" in discussions between developed and developing countries in light of "reduction in aid to developing nations" and "the scandalous increase" in money spent on arms.

The statement also notes continuing "violent conflicts" in regions cited in previous committee statements but not repeated in this one. At its meeting a year ago in Geneva, the committee referred, among other areas, to the Middle East, southern Africa, and the region in and around Afghanistan.

The WCC statement includes a six-point appeal to political leaders including:

- disarmament negotiations and responsible unilateral steps for disarmament;
- guarantees by the nuclear powers to respect nuclear-free zones in "countries which decide to create them";
- "good faith" negotiations by industrialized nations to create a "more just relationship" between them and developing countries;
- support of "the rights of people everywhere to seek changes in social, economic and political exploitative and unjust conditions".

The statement commends many actions "for disarmament and against militarism and the arms race" to the world's churches, among them :

- "clear, basic, firm affirmations" of peace concerns;
- challenges to "military and militaristic policies that lead to disastrous distortions of foreign policy";
- resistance to "feelings of contempt and hatred toward persons and ideologies to whom one is opposed";
- "serious attention ... to the rights of conscientious objectors";
- promotion of a "climate of thinking more favourable to nuclear disarmament".

EPS

NOTE: The full text of the central committee statement "Increased Threats to Peace and the Tasks of the Churches" is available on request.

SALVATION ARMY RESIGNS;  
WORLD COUNCIL REGRETS

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The Salvation Army has resigned as a member of the World Council of Churches. Following a closed session during its 11-day meeting here, the WCC central committee said it received the news "with deep regret".

It added that it would grant the Army "fraternal status", which the resignation letter from Army General Arnold Brown requests.

The Army suspended its WCC membership in 1978 following announcement of a US\$ 85,000 grant to the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe from the WCC Programme to Combat Racism special fund.

WCC and Army officials met twice since then, in December 1978 and June 1981, to discuss issues troubling the relationship between the two organizations. Commissioner Harry Williams, Salvation Army member of the central committee, attended both its meeting during that period. In January 1980 the Army received a US\$ 100,000 grant for its Zimbabwe rehabilitation work.

The Army's resignation letter pledges continued support for several large WCC programmes, among them evangelism, faith and order, medical work, and inter-church and refugee aid. But, it adds, the Army considers some WCC activities and statements political, in contrast with its understanding of its own stance as non-political.

The reply from the central committee disagrees with the Army's view of WCC policies and actions. Rather, it says, WCC actions stem from a conviction that the gospel affects all aspects of life.

Also, it notes that under the WCC constitution and operating procedures the expression of various gifts and emphases is ensured, the theological basis of membership has remained unchanged and no WCC member body is bound by council decisions.

The committee also refers to a second area of WCC-Army disagreement, which surfaced following a decision by the 1975 WCC assembly in Nairobi to foster full eucharistic fellowship. The committee repeated earlier assurances that the eucharistic fellowship emphasis does not exclude non-sacramental movements like the Army as WCC members.

The WCC also offers to maintain cooperative international relationships with the Army, says it hopes for continued Army ecumenical involvements on local, national, and regional levels, and assures the Army of WCC understanding if the Army reapplies for membership, a possibility Brown raises.

The Salvation Army was among the 146 WCC founding members in 1948. Since then, four other bodies have withdrawn -- the (white) Dutch Reformed Church and the (mixed race) Dutch Reformed Mission Church, both in South Africa; the Seventh Day Baptists, in the USA; and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. The Army resignation came at the same meeting which accepted three new WCC bodies, bringing membership to about 300 in more than 100 countries. [Story, page 7]. Other WCC members are national or regional churches. Uniquely, the Salvation Army organization in 86 countries was related to the WCC by virtue of the membership of its London-based international headquarters.



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
MEMBERSHIP: +3 -1 = 301

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - Membership of the World Council of Churches has topped 300 with the acceptance of three African Reformed churches. One WCC member, the Salvation Army, resigned at the meeting [story: page 6]. The Presbyterian Church of Mozambique, a new member, is the first from that country.

In 1975, after Mozambique won independence from Portugal, the church's hospitals, schools and some other institutions were nationalized. Its numbers declined under the anti-religious policy of the government, but believers have since returned and its membership is now put at about 15,000.

Another new WCC member is the black Presbyterian Church of Africa, with an estimated membership of about two million. Its base is in South Africa but it also has parishes in five other African nations. The church was founded in 1898 after a disagreement between black and white clergy. It now has 288 pastors and 116 evangelists.

The Presbyterian Church of Rwanda is the third new WCC member. Established by German missionaries at the end of last century, it became independent in 1959. It numbers 52,000 members, 4,000 catechumens, 10,000 children in Sunday school, and 32 pastors.

The committee also accepted two new councils of churches as WCC associate councils. The Tonga National Council of Churches includes Wesleyan, Roman Catholic, and Anglican membership. The Council of Churches for Wales includes Reformed, Methodist, Salvation Army, Anglican, and Baptist member bodies.

EPS

DRESDEN CHURCH MEETING  
RECALLS ALLIED BOMBING

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The location of the 1981 meeting of the WCC governing central committee evoked several references to and memories of the fire-bombing of this city, then part of Nazi Germany, by Allied planes on 13-14 February 1945. The attack killed 35,000 people.

A committee-approved statement on threats to peace made reference to the "devastation caused by bombing during World War II as tragically evidenced in this city", which includes several buildings still in ruins.

Thanking the committee for that reference, Johannes Hempel, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, based here, said he has "not forgotten that this was in the context of a war which we started".

A statement signed by representatives of USA, Canada, and UK churches calls "the fire storm of Dresden ... a warning of the judgement which threatens the whole world" and pledges that they will "work for reconciliation across all barriers in the world today and to stand against the principalities and powers ... which distort our visions of freedom, justice and peace". Several denominational heads are among its signers.

WCC General Secretary Philip Potter noted that the WCC headquarters building includes as a sign of reconciliation a cross made of shrapnel from Dresden and the Nazi bombing of Coventry earlier in the war.

EPS

LEADERS DISCUSS  
GDR CHURCH LIFE

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - Relationships between church and state in the GDR have evolved in a satisfactory way since the founding of this Marxist state after World War II, but there are some differences and tensions, church leaders say.

Members of a panel of 10 leaders offered that assessment following a plenary session of the governing central committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting here, devoted to church life in the GDR.

Albrecht Schönherr, retiring bishop of the Evangelical Church of Berlin-Brandenburg and head of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR, said the principle that the church has "the right to exist in a socialist society" has been established, that "efforts to understand one another" continue, and that "many things are running better than they used to".

Nonetheless, Schönherr said, there are "a large number of tensions even though we have many points in common... We have to expect a number of differences". He said Marxism and Christianity share certain principles and goals but also that there are a "large number of points at which our motivation is different".

Panel members noted that some differences between church and government over media usage and international coverage of GDR church meetings have occurred recently. They said discussions continue to resolve them.

Most GDR Christians belong to the eight regional churches -- three Lutheran and five United -- which make up the federation. About half the GDR population of approximately 17 million is counted in church membership totals, including about one million Roman Catholics. Eberhard Natho, president of the Evangelical Church of Anhalt, said relationships with Roman Catholics are "brotherly" but need improvement.

Johannes Hempel, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, was asked about the vow of support for the GDR which the government encourages young people to make. He said some parts of the youth dedication ceremony make an "absolute claim that we cannot accept". But, he added, the church should not reject young people who go through it.

As for young Saxon church members who want a civilian social-service alternative to compulsory military service, Hempel said discussions and reflection would continue with both the youth and government officials. He declined to predict what the eventual outcome would be.

Asked about relationships with Polish Christians, members of the panel said efforts continue to overcome the negative legacy of World War II. Also, they said, GDR churches have aided their Polish counterparts during the current shortages.

Besides the plenary, the GDR churches hosted a daylong outing on the Elbe. At several points along the way, groups of Christians gathered to wave or shout greetings. Some small church bands played hymns.

At the reception at the turnaround point, Schönherr compared GDR church life to the boat trip which included running "against the current" and involved some necessary manoeuvres, left and right.



GDR CHURCH LEADERS  
WELCOME WCC MEETING

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - "Why did we invite you? ... Mainly because we need you". So Johannes Hempel, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, based here, greeted members of the World Council of Churches central committee at the church service which opened the group's 11-day meeting here.

Hempel said GDR Christians would show their guests "our life as it is, with its strengths and with its weaknesses". He asked them for "frankness" and help in increasing understanding.

At the opening business session similar sentiments were voiced by Albrecht Schönherr, bishop of the Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg and head of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR, an organization of the eight territorial churches which include most of the estimated eight million GDR Christians.

"As members of the ecumenical community", Schönherr said, GDR Christians are "strengthened in their resolve neither to conform uncritically to the socialist society of the German Democratic Republic nor to reject it in principle". Recalling the days of Naziism, which "tried to turn the church into a pliable tool of its anti-humanitarian doctrine", the bishop said that as a result "German churches are sensitive to ideological distortion.

"They are glad and grateful", he continued, "to live in a country that strictly separates the state from the church, and that explicitly refuses to turn the church in a socialist country into a socialist church. They learn through the ecumenical movement", he added, "that the separation of state and church means neither church enmity against the state nor state enmity against the church", without supposing "a so-called apolitical Christian existence" which he called a "delusion".

Government greetings were brought by Klaus Gysi, GDR state secretary for religious affairs. He especially commended church efforts on behalf of "peace and social progress".

Gysi also hosted a major reception for all committee participants, as well as several smaller gatherings with food during the meeting period.

GDR newspapers included front-page committee coverage and GDR radio carried meeting reports and a live broadcast of a Sunday worship service related to the gathering.

Asked during a press conference about the location of the meeting, WCC Deputy General Secretary Konrad Raiser said it followed years of discussion and planning and was a result of "remarkable generosity" on the part of the GDR churches and "remarkable cooperation" on the part of the GDR government.

WCC General Secretary Philip Potter added that the GDR churches witness strongly to the gospel in their situation. "I wish", he said, "this were [always] the case in other parts of the world".

Besides the eight territorial churches, WCC member bodies in the GDR include the Old Catholics and Moravians. GDR Methodists are members through the USA-based United Methodist Church.

CONCERNS FOR 1983  
ASSEMBLY APPROVED

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The governing central committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting here, has chosen four major concerns for the once-in-a-decade assembly of the international ecumenical organization.

It also instructed its executive committee to designate, following consultation with member churches, 10 issues considered "ripe for action" at the mid-1983 gathering in Vancouver of 930 delegates from the WCC's more than 300 member bodies in more than 100 countries.

Assembly Theme is "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World". The four approved major concerns are "life, a gift of God", "life in the midst of death", "life in its fullness", and "life in unity". British Methodist Pauline Webb, the central committee member who chairs its assembly preparations committee, called the assembly a time when "the ecumenical movement takes flesh in its full form". She said the estimated assembly cost of US\$ 3 million is "what the world spends in two and a half minutes on armaments.

The committee approved an extensive pre-assembly plan of visitation and consultation of churches around the world. It also asked the WCC Faith and Order Commission to review the current WCC guidelines for eucharistic celebrations at meetings such as an assembly in light of contemporary theological agreements and understandings, and current eucharistic practice.

EPS

UN FUND SUGGESTED TO  
BACK DISABLED RIGHTS

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - A special United Nations fund should be set up to back the rights of disabled people, a disabled political refugee from Argentina told the World Council of Churches (WCC) governing central committee, meeting here.

Member nations of the UN could contribute to the fund according to a quota system based on the levels of their defence spending, said Nelso del Veccio during a presentation on "partners in life".

He said the special fund should be used to help disabled people who lack adequate resources to work for their basic rights and equip themselves for study and employment.

The fund would be a way to ensure that "archives full of paper" are not the only result of the 1981 International Year of Disabled Persons, he suggested.

An estimated 450 million people - one in 10 in the world - are disabled. Half, he said, are so because of avoidable causes - hunger, infectious disease and accidents.

Another section of the report dealt with children in church and family life, it urged changes in "adult-centred theological thinking and ... adult-centred congregational life" and in relationships between parents and children ... determined one-sidedly by obedience".

EPS



WORLD COUNCIL LEADER LINKS  
HEALING, 'RIGHT TO KNOW'

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - General Secretary Philip Potter of the World Council of Churches (WCC) says "the fundamental human right of people to know" should be a major factor in church activity.

Potter offered observations on the right to know among several aspects of healing in his report to the WCC's 140-member governing central committee, which met here for 11 days [16-26 August].

Calling for "healing through participation", Potter said people have a right to "be fully informed about their condition, to be able to discern the sources of their disease both within them as persons and societies and without them in other nations".

He related this right to know to a wide variety of church concerns -- from human rights, to efforts to combat racism, to activity "aimed at dispelling the mystification and ignorance surrounding the mad race for nuclear superiority by the powers and the mindless traffic of arms with irresponsible rulers, dictators and terrorists".

He linked it also to efforts to foster a "community of women and men in the church", in part by exposing "broken relationships through institutionalized male domination" and examining "afresh... received attitudes and interpretations of Scripture as well as our entrenched practices".

Potter faulted the church and its leaders who "too often... speak in generalities about the human situation and are afraid to expose and be exposed to the realities in which people find themselves.

"Too often", he continued "as soon as vested interests are involved, they either claim ignorance of the diagnosis of the ills of our society... or say they are not involved in politics, or allow themselves to be bullied by the ruling powers to stay out of politics".

The WCC leader added that "the issue begins with our own relations as churches" where "we often speak glibly of our unhappy divisions" without being "actively engaged in the process of healing" them. "The impression one gets", Potter said "is that there is still a fear of unity rather than a great and passionate conviction of the essential oneness of the people of God and of God's will to heal his people".

Potter affirmed a WCC program emphasis "on supporting, strengthening, and sustaining the weak, the sick, the maimed, the marginalised, the poor, the oppressed and deprived", although he observed that some efforts toward that goal "encounter opposition and even hostility".

Affirming also that "the essential nature of health is its source in God... beyond our own physical and social resources", Potter warned against getting "pious at this point".

Healing, he said, "is a participation in the decisive encounter of the triune God with the forces of evil, the principalities and powers which are everywhere active".

## CHURCHES SET UP ALTERNATIVE MEDICAL SUPPLY ARRANGEMENTS

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - Ecumenical agencies in 21 developing countries have formed or soon will be part of an alternate network for the supply of distribution of essential drugs for medical treatment.

The report came from Stuart Kingma, director of the World Council of Churches Christian Medical Commission. He told the WCC central committee, meeting here, that the church-related supply system means savings of up to 80 per cent.

It is also medically sound, he said, because it assures supply of a limited list of drugs which can be ordered by generic rather than manufacturers' trade names. This frees health workers from dependence on commercial chains, he noted.

The network is one response by churches to the serious shortage of basic pharmaceuticals in developing nations. In many countries, 60 per cent of people who need medicines find only empty shelves, he said.

Ecumenical cooperation in drug supplies is part of a broader health strategy which includes careful integration of herbal and other traditional medicines into modern treatment, encouragement for local drug manufacturing, and education away from heavy reliance on drugs.

It also reflects an attempt to reorient the churches' healing ministry, an area in which churches invested US\$ 200-300 million in 1979, Kingma estimated.

Michael Benckert, a West German pastor and CMC member, told the central committee that the "ideology of repair" is a mistaken approach to medical treatment.

Healing is not just a matter of individual treatment, he said, but also of water supplies, agriculture, town planning and trade union activity.

Victor Vaca, an Ecuadorian sociologist and CMC consultant, said health is a social issue, not just a medical question. The Western approach to medicine tends to ignore the social and economic factors which affect people's health, he said.

A CMC report to the committee said the commission is seeking to foster a strong link between health and broader development efforts, including agriculture and nutritional self-reliance, drinking water and sanitation programmes, economic activity and "the crucial element of the participation of the people concerned".



## CAPTIONS FOR PHOTO OIKOUMENE, SEPTEMBER 1981

For 11 days in August (16-26) the 140-member governing central committee of the World Council of Churches met in Dresden in the German Democratic Republic. For plenary sessions, committee members and several hundred more advisors, observers, staff and members of the press assembled in the Christuskirche (cover, 2678, 2679). Above the church door is a statue of Christ, "the same yesterday, today, and forever" (2681).

The opening service overfilled the 3,000-plus seat Kreuzkirche (2684, 2685). In the opening procession were the committee's leadership, Moderator Ted Scott, archbishop and primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; Vice Moderator Karekin II, Armenian Apostolic catholicos of Cilicia (in Lebanon); and Vice Moderator Jean Skuse, general secretary of the Australian Council of Churches (2682). Preacher was retired Indonesian general T.B. Simatupang, one of the six WCC presidents. (2683). Other presidents on hand were Olof Sundby, archbishop of Uppsala and primate of the (Lutheran) Church of Sweden (2672) and A.R. Jiagge, a judge from Ghana, who talked with a retired German pastor (2675).

Preparations for the WCC's 1983 assembly in Vancouver were a major agenda item. Robert Wallace (right), head of the Canadian national planning team for the event talked about it with committee member Paulos Gregorios, Syrian Orthodox metropolitan from South India, and two visitors (2671). Also part of the planning effort are committee member Pauline Webb, a British Methodist and BBC journalist, and Gordon How (right), who begins fulltime staff work for the assembly later this year (2680).

The site of the committee meeting gave members of GDR churches a chance to set up exhibits and offer presentations on their life as a "church in socialism", and the ecumenical movement. (2686, 2689). The local Lutheran bishop, Johannes Hempel, a member of the executive committee (left), chatted with Anwar Barkat, new head of the WCC Programme to Combat Racism (2688). Other WCC staff present included Jean Fischer (centre), of the WCC inter-church aid commission, Julio de Santa Ana (left), of the WCC development commission, and Patrick Coidan, of the finance office (2676). Another staff member, Deputy General Secretary Marie Assaad (left), chatted with Committee member Margaret Younquist (2690).

The WCC includes about 300 member bodies from more than 100 countries. Its committee membership reflects that diversity and includes, for example, ordained ministers from the Soviet Union (2677) and Korea (2692, on right with translator), and lay people from Zaire (2691) and the USA (2673). The latter, Methodist Janice Love, listened as Norwegian Lutheran Bishop Per Lønning made a point.

During the meeting WCC General Secretary Philip Potter celebrated his 60th birthday (2687). He was serenaded by a group including young volunteer stewards (2668) who gave him a gift which he put on. (2669 and 2670). Also singing greetings was a blind Jamaican calypso singer (2674), present in connection with committee attention to the International Year of the Disabled.



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No 23



# DRESDEN 81





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2681

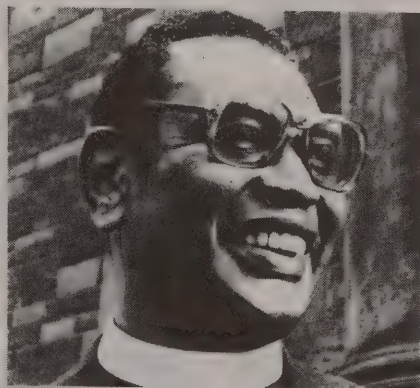




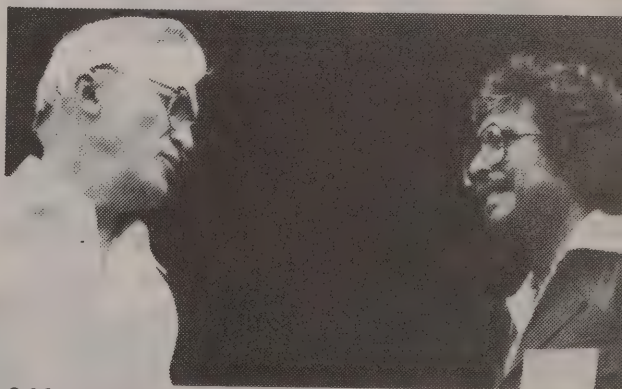


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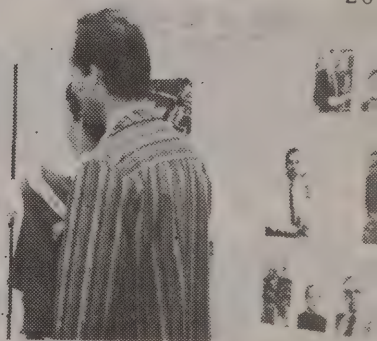
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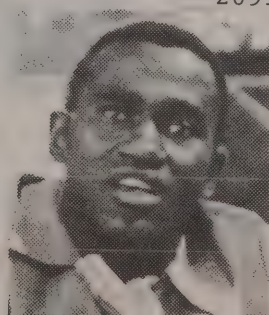
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# Ecumenical Press Service

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\*\* PLEASE NOTE EMBARGO !

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WORLD COUNCIL COMMITTEE  
CONCLUDES MEETING IN GDR

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - Meeting for the first time in 25 years in Eastern Europe, the World Council of Churches central committee acted on several public issues, a series of recommendations on the role of women, and the resignation of the Salvation Army from WCC membership. Committee statements and actions dealt with refugees, "threats to peace", and situations in southern Africa, Northern Ireland, and Australia.

Reacting to the "world refugee crisis", the committee urged WCC member churches in more than 100 countries to work to assure "the right of every person to stay, to leave, and to return to their country". [story: page 5]

Its peace statement cited several "threats", including "new dehumanizing weapons" such as the neutron bomb, "the most recent and obvious example". It urged a ban on the bomb "and any other such weapon". [EPS No.23, page 2]

Among its actions on southern Africa, the committee, through WCC General Secretary Philip Potter, sent a telegram to United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim condemning the South African "invasion of Angola". In other statements, it reiterated support for independence for Namibia and faulted South African removal of black squatters from a shantytown near Capetown. [Story: page 3]

In a brief statement on Northern Ireland, the committee expressed "profound concern" at what is going on there. It offered to "help in any way". Receiving a report from a WCC team which visited Australia earlier this year, the committee urged various international actions to bring the problems of that country's Aborigines to world attention. [Story: page 4]

After prolonged debate, which featured Eastern and Oriental Orthodox unease with some recommendations, the committee approved as a goal equal participation of women and men in WCC decision-making and advisory bodies. It also endorsed a series of other recommendations which followed a four-year WCC study on the community of women and men in the church. They include the use of "inclusive language" in WCC publications. [Story: page 2]

The Salvation Army's departure from WCC membership was received by the committee "with deep regret". In a reply letter it rejected implications that some of its actions have a political rather than a gospel motivation. The Army asked for and was granted "fraternal status" with the WCC. Three new WCC member churches were accepted. [Stories: EPS No.23, pages 3,4]

The committee's 11 days in Dresden included several opportunities for GDR Christians to show and speak of their life and work in a socialist society. Albrecht Schönherr, head of the federation of eight regional Lutheran and United churches which include most of the country's Christians, said that "as members of the ecumenical community" they are "strengthened in their resolve neither to conform uncritically to the socialist society" of the GDR "nor to reject it in principle". [Stories: EPS No.23, pages 5 & 6].

WORLD COUNCIL GOAL:  
EQUAL REPRESENTATION

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The World Council of Churches has been committed to work towards equal representation of women and men in its decision-making and consultative bodies.

At its 1981 meeting, here, the council's governing central committee affirmed the principle of equal participation by women and men as "a goal towards which we move".

It decided the Sixth Assembly of the WCC, to be held in mid-1983 in Vancouver, would be the time to start to implement the principle.

The decision is one result of the four-year WCC study on the community of women and men in the church. A task of the central committee has been to incorporate study findings into all aspects of the council's life. The approved resolution said "the principle of men and women in partnership means equal participation".

Central committee member Janice Love, a USA Methodist, offered the resolution. She said it is not a quota to be imposed on member churches, but a principle for monitoring council work.

An afternoon of debate featured Eastern and Oriental Orthodox opposition to the proposal.

Central committee vice-moderator and Lebanon-based Armenian Catholicos Karekin II questioned whether equal participation by women and men could be separated from other issues of equal representation. It is "one of the basic questions but not the only one", he said.

Metropolitan Chrysostomos (Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople) said Orthodox members opposed voting on the resolution because of its dogmatic implications. But Paul Crow, from the USA Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), said that for other churches, dogmatic implications lead to an affirmation of equal participation of women and men.

The recommendation was finally approved overwhelmingly, with a few negative votes. Orthodox generally abstained.

Also much debated was a letter written by participants in a WCC consultation on women and men last July in Sheffield, UK. At first the recommendation was to receive the letter and commend it for "serious and prayerful study". But the committee finally voted to "take note" of it and send it and the full Sheffield report to member churches as soon as possible. A covering letter is to "present clearly the controversies raised" in debate, especially "objections ... by Orthodox".

The committee also decided to incorporate women's concerns and female staff into various WCC programs, and to recommend "inclusive language" in all WCC publications. The final report on the community study is to be given to the WCC Faith and Order Commission at its January meeting in Lima. Further attention to women's ordination, the understanding of the diaconate, and language and images for God was referred to the commission. [Earlier stories: EPS No.20-23 July 1981].



WORLD CHURCHES COMMITTEE  
SPEAKS ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The governing central committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting here, has issued several statements on the situation in southern Africa.

In response to a request from the committee, WCC General Secretary Philip Potter sent a telegram to United Nations Secretary General Kurt Waldheim expressing "profound concern in the wake of "South Africa's invasion of Angola". It urged him to "take all available steps to cause South Africa to withdraw immediately... from Angola" and the UN Security Council to "adopt urgently comprehensive sanctions against South Africa".

Reacting to South African removal of black squatters from a shantytown near Capetown, the committee urged all Christians to "condemn the South African regime's barbarous act of destroying African families and the makeshift houses of defenceless people". It encouraged South African churches "in their exercise of a prophetic ministry".

In another statement, the committee said South Africa is continuing to develop nuclear weapons capacity "with the help of foreign governments and private interests".

Moreover, it said, "South African agents continue and have seriously intensified attacks and assassinations of liberation movement leaders ... and acts of sabotage against neighbouring states".

These are two elements in what the committee called a "tragic and worsening situation" in Namibia, a mostly black territory controlled by white-minority-governed South Africa. The committee repeated several previous appeals for actions to "achieve a just and peaceful solution for Namibia".

The committee also said the USA government has "extended its collaboration" with South Africa "as an ally and friend". In Namibia, it said, "persecution and torture of many innocent people, including especially pastors and church workers... continue, as do attacks on church properties".

Among other things, the council statement reiterated support for resolution 435 of the United Nations Security Council as "the sole basis for a negotiated settlement of the war in Namibia", involving forces of South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO). It called SWAPO "the authentic representative of the Namibian people".

In a later church action on the squatter situation, South African Council of Churches General Secretary Desmond Tutu announced that the SACC has given some squatters money to return to Capetown. Many of the squatters are women and children seeking to join husbands and fathers doing contract work in the area.

Piet Koornhoof, the South African government minister responsible for black affairs, said more than 1,000 squatters were being bussed back to the Capetown area in an effort to embarrass the government. Tutu said the government policy on residence areas for non-whites violates God's law by destroying family life.

IRELAND, AUSTRALIA FOCUS  
OF WORLD COUNCIL ACTIONS

Dresden, GDR (EPS) - The situation in Northern Ireland and the condition of Australia's Aborigine population figured in discussion and action at the 1981 meeting, here, of the World Council of Churches governing central committee.

In a brief, four-point resolution, the committee expressed "profound concern at wider implications of what is happening in Northern Ireland, and the religious dimension in the tension and conflict which causes scandal".

It offered to "help in any way", encouraged "all the work faithfully and courageously for peace and reconciliation", and called for "prayer for people involved in the conflict in Ireland..."

In another action, the committee directed that a report from a WCC team which spent three weeks in June and July examining the situation of Aborigines in Australia be sent to United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim and regional bodies such as the Organization of African Unity.

The council is also to see if the International Commission of Jurists, the UN Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International would make their own studies of the Aboriginal situation, which the WCC report describes as shocking.

It says that "the real solution to the problems of homelessness, unemployment, alcoholism, despair and exploitation is to recognize the land rights of the Aboriginal people and allow them to reconstruct their culture and broken communal life".

The committee suggested that the upcoming meeting in Australia of heads of Commonwealth governments would "provide opportunities for the churches" to bring the Aboriginal situation to the attention of Commonwealth countries, especially in Africa and Asia.

(Earlier stories: EPS No.17-18 June, No.18-25 June, No.19-9 July, and EPS No.21-6 August).

EPS



CHURCH ACTION URGED ON  
'WORLD REFUGEE CRISIS'

Dresden, GDR - Speaking on the "world refugee crisis", the World Council of Churches has urged its members in more than 100 countries to work to assure "the right of every person to stay, to leave and to return to their country".

The refugee statement was approved by the WCC central committee, meeting here. It calls the situation of "refugees, displaced persons, expellees and exiles" among the "most dramatic phenomena of our times", with "millions of people forced to leave their homes and their countries".

Among seven "disturbing trends" related to refugees, the statement cites increased restrictions on refugee entry into "most countries" and an "alarming" increase in the number of refugees expelled from places in which they have sought asylum.

The committee calls on churches to "help prepare the legal, political and economic conditions which would facilitate repatriation" of refugees.

The statement also urges "opportunities and places of worship" for non-Christian refugees who end up "within Christian communities" and church attention to refugees' physical and spiritual needs. Governments are urged to "respect the security and territorial integrity of countries which are hosts to refugees".

EPS

NEW PRESIDENT ELECTED BY  
AFRICA CHURCHES ASSEMBLY

Nairobi (EPS) - The All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) assembly, meeting here, has elected Anglican Archbishop Walter Khotso Makhula of Botswana as AACC president for the next five years. He succeeds Richard Andriamanjato, an ordained minister from Madagascar.

Divided into five sections to discuss major issues before the church in Africa, the assembly made several recommendations to the AACC and its 120 member denominations. Among its proposals:

- study of the role of laity in ministry.
- increased attention to economic liberation based on revised national and international economic patterns.
- increased attention to African insights and concerns in shaping church programmes and activities.
- pastoral responsibility for the millions of African refugees.
- prophetic witness by the church in whatever ideological system it finds itself.
- use of biblical concepts of reconciliation to further human liberation by God rather than as an ideological tool.

[Earlier stories: EPS No.21 - 6 August, & EPS No.22 - 13 August 1981]

EPS

EMBARGOED: 14.45 GMT, 8 September 1981

FIFTH ANGLICAN  
COUNCIL MEETS

Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK (EPS) - The fifth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council began here 8 September. The 10-day assembly of five dozen representatives from the more than two dozen Anglican churches around the world includes as major agenda items unity and ecumenical affairs and Christian training. It first met in 1971.

In his review of the "state of church affairs", John Howe, bishop and ACC secretary general, said "there is a good deal to be said" for disregarding "rules or traditions that would seem to keep [churches] apart". But, he added, "the discounting of order has been tried before and is never very successful. It achieves a rearrangement of the pattern of the cracks rather than a restoration of wholeness".

Reviewing official theological dialogue between Anglicans and representatives of other traditions, Howe said "new possibilities have opened" in terms of Roman Catholic relations, "but even so there seems among some to be excessive optimism".

He also cited "a point of encouragement that is often overlooked", that "much of the agreement that is becoming possible with the Romans already exists with some other churches". In that regard, he said it "seems probable that -- at least on the theological level -- matters that keep" Anglicans and Reformed apart "are fewer than we thought".

As for the Orthodox, Howe said official theological discussions with them "are of more importance than churches, including the Orthodox churches, sometimes realize; but", he added, "expectations of a unity that is not too far off in time appear previous".

EPS

LUTHERANS SPEAK  
ON PEACE, NAMIBIA

Turku, Finland (EPS) - The executive committee of the Lutheran World Federation has sent identical letters to USA President Ronald Reagan and USSR President Leonid Brezhnev. They urge "you and your government" to "establish the basis for an immediate resumption of disarmament talks". The committee said such actions by the two leaders would "greatly improve the prospects for peace".

At its meeting here, the committee also approved a statement on peace and an appeal for continued church support for independence for Namibia, about half of whose mostly black population is Lutheran.

In the peace message, the committee said it "deplores" several things, among them "the massive build-up of an intermediate range of nuclear missiles by the USSR and the USA" and "the development of new weapons, such as the neutron warheads in various countries". It also faulted "the large-scale increase in military spending on both sides, ... continuation of numerous armed conflicts in different parts of the world", and "prolongation and intensification of such conflicts by big power involvement... on the basis of ideological self-interest".

EPS



WORLD STUDENT  
ASSEMBLY MEETS

San Francisco (EPS) - The assembly of the World Student Christian Federation, meeting here, has approved several resolutions on social and political issues. Formed in 1895, the WSCF includes Christian student movements in more than 80 countries.

The assembly expressed outrage at the fate of WSCF staff imprisoned in South Korea and abducted in the Philippines. It opposed "aims and practices of the Moral Majority", a USA movement generally supportive of the philosophy of the Reagan administration. An assembly resolution called the movement a "threat to the freedom and diversity within the Body of Christ".

Near the start of the 12-day assembly [11-22 August], students sampled some aspects of USA life in the area, including visits with trade unionists, ethnic community representatives, and various political and social activists.

A representative of striking USA air traffic controllers said that "as a brother in Christ I don't want you to fly because I don't want to see you get killed". Later the assembly passed a resolution in favour of the strike and urging that the controllers, fired because the strike is against USA law, be reinstated.

Several resolutions were presented by Latin American delegates in support of the revolutions in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Granada, and urging the USA not to interfere in those countries' internal affairs. The assembly also asked the USA to let Puerto Rico "freely determine" its status.

European delegates called on all churches to unite in opposition to the arms race. The Asian region proposed actions on human rights violations in South Korea and called for negotiations on the political status of Hong Kong.

African representatives affirmed federation support for the South West Africa People's Organization, a force opposed to the control of Namibia by South Africa. The federation also reaffirmed its view that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the "sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people". It urged "legitimate national rights" for Palestinians and "peace and national unity" for Lebanon.

Federation General Secretary Emidio Campi said the WSCF is and should remain a "relevant minority". Theme of the gathering, taken from Nehemiah 2, was "Come, Let Us Rise Up and Build Together".

A special gathering of women met for four days before the assembly. Among other things, it described the "weak representation of women in the structures of leadership" as "unacceptable". It also said "the style and process used for discussions in the meetings present problems for women".

WORLD STUDENT ASSEMBLY  
CONSIDERS ROLE IN '80s

San Francisco (EPS) - The 28th World Student Christian Federation assembly, which brought delegates from more than 80 nations to the University of San Francisco, here, wrestled with the form and structure of ecumenical student witness in the 1980s. It was the first USA assembly since 1913 for the WSCF, which coordinates activities of more than 100 allied movements around the world.

Its concluding message spoke to those in the movement "in repressive regimes who are struggling with your lives and future". Assembly participants, it said, "humbly offer .... solidarity and are continually inspired by your living witness.

"To our friends in the ecumenical community", it continued, "we share with you the ecumenical vision of the renewal of the church and of a renewed society. We invite you in this journey of faith and struggle to rise up and build together".

If at times the plenary sessions seemed bureaucratic, important exchanges occurred during meals and in sessions that ran into the morning hours as the rich experience represented by people wrestling with the meaning of Christian participation in liberation struggles all over the world was widely shared.

Scheduled every four years, the general assembly is the WSCF's main deliberative body. During the assembly several working groups defined the program priorities for the next quadrennium which were then debated and approved by the full assembly.

The priorities include emphases on movement building and leadership development, theology and ecumenism, political involvement, education, finances, communications and women's participation.

The financial situation of the federation has improved markedly since the last assembly, the income approximately doubling. But the assembly accepted a working group judgement that "no similar increase can be expected in the next quadrennium".

The assembly approved a "Woman's Program Fund" to carry out proposals "for education, communication and networking..." among women. The federation will develop a program for seeing that women are encouraged to participate in all levels of the movements.

The assembly elected Juan Antonio Franco, member of the United Church of Christ in Puerto Rico, doctoral candidate in sociology, and former WSCF staff person for Latin America, as chairperson for the next quadrennium.

The vice-chairperson is Lydi Nacpil, member of the United Methodist Church of the Philippines, student at the University of the Philippines, and general secretary of the Philippines SCM.

Tarak Mitri, member of the Antiochian Orthodox Church, in Lebanon, doctoral candidate, and for the past seven years Middle East staff member for the WSCF, is the newly elected treasurer.

The new executive committee, for the first time equally composed of men and women, was also elected by the assembly.

EPS

=Leon Howell\*

\*Howell, a freelance journalist, was WSCF assembly press officer.



MIDDLE EAST CHRISTIANS'  
'ALARMING DECLINE' CITED

Indianapolis (Indiana) USA (EPS) - Christians in the Middle East are a "minority in alarming decline" according to the ecumenical officer of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), based here.

Paul Crow offered his observations after a three-week fact-finding tour of the area with more than 50 other Jewish and Christian leaders. He said political instability and poverty have prompted Christian emigration from the Middle East at a rate so rapid "that by the year 2000 there may not be any Christians left in the very places sacred to church history".

The Disciples official said the Christian presence in the Middle East is "vulnerable because no political power is raising its voice in support of it". He described Christians there as "often... caught in the cross-fire between Muslim and Jewish political aspirations".

Speaking specifically of Jerusalem, where Christians are about one percent of the population, Crow said that "when we Christians emotionally withdraw... regarding the holy places as museums, we are allowing a spiritual centre of the world to become controlled solely by political forces".

He urged Christians who visit the Middle East to "work to understand the crises there, a task related to our Christian witness..."

EPS

COPTIC CHURCH HEAD  
DISAVOWS USA GROUP

Cairo (EPS) - The head of the Coptic Church says the USA-based Coptic American Association "does not at all express the church's point of view, but is completely contradictory to it".

A statement from Pope Shenouda III says his Oriental Orthodox church, the predominant form of Christianity in Egypt, has been "much harmed" by actions and statements of the association. They are, he writes, "against the principles of the church, its spiritual life, its known patriotism and love for Egypt, and its loyalty towards its rulers, as well as its long national history".

The association issues reports of what it describes as persecution of Christians in mostly Muslim Egypt. "We call on our churches ... not to accept what this association publishes and to refrain from dealing with it", the pope says.

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat called a special session of the Egyptian parliament for 5 September to deal with religious questions. A weekly published by Sadat's National Democratic Party said the president cancelled all engagements in the week before the session to study reports on last June's fighting between Muslims and Christians in a Cairo suburb.

The magazine of the Muslim Brotherhood was confiscated by the authorities for the second month in a row in August because of what a government official described as "many excesses".

EPS

MAJOR CHANGES URGED  
IN CHURCH OF ENGLAND

London (EPS) - A major report on Church of England structures, finances, and attitudes says it is "shackled by an accumulation of traditions, customs and archaic structures".

The report of the "Partners in Mission" consultation was released in September. Participants included "internal" (from the Church of England) and "external" (from non-Anglican and overseas Anglican churches) partners.

"In fact", says the report, "substantial changes are needed in forms of ministry, in our pattern of voluntary societies, in synodical structures, in state relations, in methods of finance, and in inter-diocesan relations".

Initially, the external partners called the established status of the church a "hindrance" to its mission, making it "unable to perform its prophetic ministry freely". However, following further discussion, says the report, it was concluded that the real issue is not so much precise organizational arrangements as the common impression that the church is one of the privileged.

"So", says the report, "we do not propose any effort to restructure the establishment. It is the attitude so often dominant in the Church of England that must be transformed".

Calling for major changes in church financing, the partners urge an investment policy more attuned to the needs of the oppressed and disadvantaged, such as South African blacks. They also urge that parishes assume responsibility by 1995 for paying their clergy. Currently, the commissioners who manage income from church endowments use more than half of it (UK£ 45 million of UK£ 79 million) on clergy stipends.

In another document released at about the same time, this one by the Roman Catholic justice commission for the church in Wales and England, the connection between the eucharist and commitment to the poor and oppressed is stressed.

"The Eucharist and Justice" discussion paper suggests that "until the church as a body recognizes its collusion in evil, does penance for its sin and searches for ways to oppose that structural evil, at whatever cost to itself or the size of its membership, then its worship is inevitably tainted with hypocrisy and cannot form the wellspring of vitality, hope and creative energy... contained in the 'real presence' of Christ in the eucharist".

EPS



ECUTEXT: Documentation in the Oikoumene  
Salvation Army Letter of Resignation

31st July, 1981.

Dear Dr. Potter,

Members of the Salvation Army delegation which you and your colleagues received so cordially in Geneva on June 3rd have given further prayerful reflection to those helpful deliberations, and the subject of the Salvation Army's relationship with the World Council of Churches has also had the renewed attention of the Advisory Council to the General.

The feeling is that those who carry the chief responsibility for the World Council of Churches have been exceedingly patient not only in correspondence but also in allowing us ample time to study those aspects of the relationship that have troubled many Salvationists. We were aware that to be "in suspension pending dialogue" was, under the World Council of Churches' constitution, an unrecognized status and, because of this, your tolerance has been all the more appreciated.

The time has come, however, to resolve the situation, and we therefore ask for an adjustment in the relationship that presently exists. The Salvation Army wishes to move from full membership to fraternal status under the provision in the Constitution (Section VI. 1, and Section XII of the Rules).

In making this request we are acting on the best consensus we can gain, based on the most careful polling of our world-wide leadership, and via the processes explained in detail during our deliberations in Geneva on June 3rd.

The reasons for this submission have been shared with you, and at length. In summary, they revolve around the fact of The Salvation Army's internationality which itself inevitably implies diversity of views concerning our relationship. The preservation of that internationality, by the very nature of our Movement, is vital to us, and, we feel, to those whom we serve.

To lose any spiritual fellowship with the World Council of Churches would be for us as undesirable and painful as it would be if we were to sever the happy relationship we enjoy with local, regional and national Councils of Churches around the world, as well as with the various communions and denominations whose witness and work for Christ we prayerfully uphold and in which, in our unique way, we share.

There are unquestionably aspects of the World Council of Churches' activity which demand our full support, e.g. the Commission on Evangelism, the Commission on Faith and Order, CICARWS, and CMC. We would certainly wish to demonstrate such support in more positive and practical ways. Our gravamen has to do with the issuance by the World Council of Churches of statements, the developing of policies and the carrying out of actions which we regard as political, and which, as such, endanger the non-political nature of the Army, the preservation of which is basic to the Movement's effectiveness in a number of countries. Refusal to identify with political factions, as distinct from deep social concern for the needy people of all lands regardless of creed, colour or political persuasion, has been the essence of the Army's life and endeavour from its very beginnings. Indeed, we see clearly that any such political identification would inevitably cut us off from large numbers of those very people we seek to succour. The Salvation Army's foundation belief is that the only real hope for the transformation of society lies in personal salvation through faith in the redemptive grace of Christ.

This submission comes to you in the prayerful hope that all who will be related to its consideration can accept that it is motivated only by a desire, on the one hand, to remain in the most harmonious relationship with the World Council of Churches that our position will allow, and, on the other hand, to follow a course which appears to us, after relentless heart-searching and long and prayerful study, to be the proper one at this particular time.

No one knows what the future may bring. Should the day come when circumstances encourage The Salvation Army to leave fraternal status and seek full membership, I hope that our readiness to apply would be understood by the World Council of Churches' understanding.

Our constant prayer is that for you and all who share your immense responsibilities there may continue to be granted "the wisdom that cometh from above".

With warmest personal greetings and every good wish. May divine grace be yours in overflowing measure.

Yours sincerely,

Arnold Brown

ECUTEXT: Documentation in the Oikoumene  
WCC Central Committee Reply to SA Letter

Dresden, August 24, 1981

Dear General Brown,

The Central Committee of the WCC received with deep regret the news of the Salvation Army's decision to resign its membership of the World Council of Churches. In your letter of July 31st, 1981 you express the desire to remain in the most harmonious possible relationship with the WCC. The Committee accepts your resignation and accedes to your request for fraternal status as a world confessional body. Formally, in terms of our constitution, this means that you may be invited to send non-voting representatives to our meetings in such numbers as the Central Committee shall determine.

As a founding member of the WCC, the Salvation Army has belonged since 1948 to this worldwide fellowship of Churches which "confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit". This basis of membership is open to the variety of emphases and gifts that different members bring to the total fellowship. Expression of this variety is ensured by the WCC's constitution. The Central Committee regrets that the Salvation Army feels that, as a member of our fellowship, it compromises its special emphasis on personal salvation through Christ as "the only hope for the transformation of society".

In explaining the reason for your resignation of membership, you refer to statements, policies and actions of the WCC with which you take issue. Yet it has been clear from the earliest years of the Council's life that no member is bound by any action of the whole Council. To quote from the WCC Central Committee statement in 1950, "membership in the Council does not in any sense mean that the Churches belong to a body which can take decisions for them. Each Church retains the constitutional right to ratify or to reject utterances or actions of the Council".

You describe in your letter that you have agonised over this decision since 1978 when you first suspended your membership. The Central Committee appreciates the difficulties you found, but wishes it had been possible for you to continue the dialogue on the issues you had raised. We feel compelled to disagree with the contrast you draw between the so-called political nature of the action of the World Council of Churches and your own claim to have a non-political stance. From its inception the World Council of Churches has always acted from the deep conviction that the imperatives of the Christian Gospel affect all realms of life. Indeed, one of the constitutional functions of the Council is to promote "one human family in justice and peace".

We welcome the continuing support you express in your letter for large areas of the Council's work, especially World Mission and Evangelism, Faith and Order, Inter-Church Aid and the Christian Medical Commission. But these programmes are inextricably bound up with all the policies of the Council in all areas of its work, including the Programme to Combat Racism, over which you have had particular difficulty.

We are aware, from our conversation with you, that the World Council's search for "full eucharistic fellowship" poses problems for you as a non-sacramental movement. We can only reiterate the assurances we have given you that this phrase is not a part of the basis for membership and therefore does not exclude you from our fellowship.

You express the hope that should the day come when the Salvation Army reapplies for membership the World Council would meet you with understanding. We can assure you of our willingness to do so.

Meanwhile, we shall maintain cooperative working relationships at the international level, and we share your hope that at local, national and regional levels the ecumenical relationship which the Salvation Army enjoys will continue to grow.

We greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

On behalf of the Central Committee,

Edward W. Scott, Moderator

Philip A. Potter, General Secretary



No.25/48th Year 1981

18 September 1981

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\*\* PLEASE NOTE EMBARGO !

THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 25 SEPTEMBER 1981

WORLD COUNCIL ENDS RELATIONS  
WITH 3 BANKS OVER APARTHEID

Geneva (EPS) - The World Council of Churches has announced an end to its relations with three banks whose South African business was judged to be "supporting the system of racism embodied in apartheid," that country's system of race separation.

The WCC said it would close as soon as possible its Sfr 1 million account with the Union Bank of Switzerland, and transfer from UBS management its Sfr 20 million investment portfolio.

Two other banks - Swiss Bank Corporation and Dresdner Bank (Federal Republic of Germany) - are included in the WCC decision, but currently the council has no funds there.

The actions are in line with policy first enunciated at the 1968 WCC assembly. It urged an end to investments in "institutions that perpetuate racism". That policy led to closing an account with the Midland Bank (United Kingdom) in 1974 and that of the WCC USA Conference with Citibank in 1981.

Last February, the WCC executive committee approved five criteria to apply to banks to determine whether or not to continue relationships. They ask whether the bank maintains facilities in South Africa, regularly manages loans and/or bond issues for South Africa, has continued substantive South African lending since 1976, grants South African loans with a direct or indirect military purpose, or makes loans which benefit the South African nuclear industry.

The WCC announced that after several months of discussion and correspondence, six banks with whom the WCC has relationships meet its criteria - Algemene Bank Nederland, Bankers Trust, Banque Scandinave en Suisse, Lloyds Bank Limited, Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken, Union Bank of Finland.

Two Swiss banks (Genossenschaftliche Zentralbank and Internationale Genossenschaftsbank), Algemene Bank Nederland, and Lloyds Bank Limited were identified as possible alternatives to the three. Relations are to continue with six "moderately involved" banks "pending the results of further dialogue". Their South African involvement was described as being to a "far lesser degree".

Wesley Kenworthy, WCC assistant general secretary for finance and administration, said the action came because the international ecumenical organization is "concerned to put its own house in order". He said it is "not in any way a criticism" of the "entirely satisfactory" services rendered by the banks over the years, or of their employees. The sole WCC objective, he said, is to foster "non-violent change toward a genuine multi-racial society in South Africa".

He also noted that the WCC action deals only with banks with which it has relationships and so is not a list of all banks heavily involved in South Africa.

WCC general secretary Philip Potter said the WCC did "not take this action with any pleasure," but rather "out of deep concern for the people of South Africa, both those who oppress and those who are oppressed".



SWISS BANKS CRITICIZE  
WORLD COUNCIL DECISION

Geneva (EPS) - The Union Bank of Switzerland and the Swiss Bank Corporation, with which the World Council of Churches ended relations because of their involvement in South Africa, say their business there does not support apartheid (race separation).

In a joint statement, the two banks said they believe that "credits and bond issues which they and many other grant to South Africa contribute to the economic development of the black population's situation and the eventual elimination of apartheid."

They added that bank representatives "in discussions with leading South African personalities and in public... have criticized apartheid." But, they added, the WCC request that they sever business ties with South Africa "would... serve only to strengthen the social and economic differences and not lead to the goals desired. Such action would also be in opposition to the traditionally observed principle of non-interference in the affairs of other nations."

The banks noted that Switzerland "maintains normal diplomatic and business relations with South Africa". They said that through their operations, "Swiss banks fulfill their responsibilities to Swiss exporters, whose products also help to better the living standards of South Africa's entire population."

A WCC briefing paper on the decision rejected the bank view that decisions to make loans to South Africa are based on neutral business criteria with no political connotations. "Such a position," it said, "completely denies the fact that any dealings with South Africa at this point in history have profound political ramifications."

EPS

ROMAN CATHOLICS, ANGLICANS  
CONCLUDE DIALOGUE SERIES

London (EPS) - The international Anglican/Roman Catholic dialogue commission ended 12 years of work at a meeting here (25 August - 3 September). It approved a final report containing previously released statements on eucharist, ministry, and church authority, as well as "substantial new material both completing and elucidating the authority statement."

Contents of the report were not immediately released. The commissioners say "authorities of these churches... must receive it before it is published for more general discussion. The future of the report would be prejudiced by premature partial accounts of its content!"

The group's communique says its recent meetings resulted in "clarification" of four questions related to church authority -- interpretation of texts about Peter in the New Testament, meaning of language about 'divine right' as related to papal authority, the question of papal infallibility, and the nature of the pope's jurisdiction in his role as universal primate.

EPS

COPTIC POPE  
URGES 'CALM'

Cairo (EPS) - Pope Shenouda III has urged members of the Coptic Church to "remain calm" in the wake of the revocation of a 1971 government decree endorsing his election as head of the church, to which most of Egypt's Christian minority belongs.

The revocation by Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat was part of a series of actions early in September to combat what he described as religious extremism and threats to national unity, particularly among certain Muslim elements. Among about 1,500 people detained were eight Coptic bishops and 16 priests.

Copies of the pope's handwritten pastoral letter were reportedly being shared at meetings of priests and other church members. Addressed to "my beloved children," it was written from "the monastery where I seek spiritual rest."

According to Mayo, the newspaper of the Sadat political party, the president's action means, among other things, that Pope Shenouda "should not stay in Cairo or Alexandria and is advised to remain in his monastery."

Also, his "signature or seal is no longer valid for all government and official records" and he "should not be allowed to meet the public in order to ensure the safety of the people, to preserve the reputation of the church, and for the sake of national security."

Sadat appointed a five-bishop committee to perform papal duties regarding the state. The committee is chaired by Bishop Samuel, since 1954 a member of the World Council of Churches central committee.

In his letter, the pope said "the ecclesial situation, whether it relates to me or to the five bishops assigned by Sadat, remains unchanged. From the depth of my heart I pray to God for their success in all their work. They are, all distinguished fathers, with long experience in service, and they are the subject of my love," he added.

The bishops' committee met with Sadat 15 September. He reportedly assured them that the arrested priests and bishops would soon be released. Earlier the committee pledged to exert all efforts to protect peace and unity in the church and nation. In internal terms, the pope continues to head the church. Prayers continue to be offered for him and his picture remains in customary places.

In Geneva, the WCC said it hoped that unity within the church and among all Egyptians would be preserved in this "severely critical period". It called for prayers for the Egyptian people.

In addition, WCC General Secretary Philip Potter sent a message to Bishop Samuel. Responding to a report in Mayo that the WCC is among several organizations involved in funding secret military training for Copts in Lebanon, Potter said the "allegation...is absurd falsehood that defames long established and publicly open record of WCC as channel of development and emergency aid and advocate of peace and reconciliation in the Middle East." He urged the bishop to "answer this allegation immediately."

\* \* \* \* \*

Note: A translation from the Arabic of the pastoral letter is available of request.



LUTHERANS, ORTHODOX  
BEGIN WORLD DIALOGUE

Espoo, Finland (EPS) - "Full communion" between Lutherans and Eastern Orthodox was announced as the "ultimate goal" of the first official theological dialogue between world representatives of the two Christian traditions.

After separate preparations since 1978, the Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox representatives held their first joint session here (27 August - 4 September). The dialogue is co-sponsored by the Geneva-based Lutheran World Federation and the Istanbul-based Ecumenical Patriarchate. Regional and national Lutheran-Eastern Orthodox dialogues have gone on in recent years in Finland, the Soviet Union, Romania and the German Democratic Republic.

Leaders of the two traditions said a major difficulty for dialogue between them is lack of a common theological language. In some cases, some basic Christian concepts have come to be expressed and emphasized quite differently by each.

Metropolitan Emilianos, patriarchal representative in Geneva and dialogue co-chair, said that "if negotiations are to progress, it is essential that a common language be found". He said the two traditions would have to look for truth they share rooted in the undivided church of the early centuries.

Munich University professor Georg Kretschmar, Lutheran co-chair, called the meeting "a great step forward because we learned to trust one another much more than we ever did before".

Present to greet the dialogue members was Patriarch Pimen, head of the Russian Orthodox Church, who was on a week long visit with other Russian Orthodox leaders to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. Its head, Archbishop Mikko Juva, called the visit a "demonstration of respect, trust, and friendship" for Finnish Lutherans. A sixth round of bilateral talks between the two churches is being planned.

At a press conference, Metropolitan Filaret, chair of the Russian church's external relations department, stressed church responsibility for world peace. He condemned explicitly the USA decision to build and stockpile the neutron bomb.

Asked about USSR church-state relations, the hierarch called them "normal and stable". He spoke of a "development and a deepening in relations between church and state in such a way that these relations are beginning to include more and more spheres of life". He also noted that "in these relations, as in all areas of human life, there can be difficulties and the law can be broken on one side or the other".

EMBARGO: 12.00 GMT, Monday 21 September 1981

WORLD COUNCIL ANTI-RACISM  
GRANTS TOTAL US\$ 587,000

Geneva (EPS) - This year's grants from the special fund of the World Council of Churches Programme to Combat Racism total US\$587,000, to 47 groups. Approved by the WCC executive committee last month, the grants were announced here 21 September.

The biggest single grant is to the South West Africa Peoples Organization (US\$125,000). Another US\$125,000 is split between three South African organizations - African National Congress (US\$65,000), Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (US\$45,000) and South African Congress of Trade Unions (US\$15,000).

The SWAPO grant is for administrative and legal defence costs in Namibia and broadcasting and administrative costs in four countries which border Namibia. The ANC grant is for youth and educational work, that of PAC for its publications, that of SACTU for a bi-monthly journal and a workers relief fund.

Eight groups are receiving special fund money for the first time:

- Guadeloupe Union of Christian Youth Movements and Christian Group for Research and Action, US\$7,500 for materials to assist their efforts "against colonial oppression and to help people discover their own cultural identity".
- Independence Front of New Caledonia, US\$10,000 for internal and external publicity and organization efforts toward "liberation from French colonial rule and struggle for political, economic and cultural independence".
- Searchlight, US\$9,000 for a fulltime staffperson for this UK monthly "whose aim is to inform...about the nature and extent of extreme right-wing and racist organizations in Britain..."
- SACTU Solidarity Committee, US\$4,000 for a fulltime staff person for this Canadian offshoot of SACTU.
- South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, US\$5,000 for a "more dynamic role in combatting racism in sports and in seeking total isolation of apartheid South Africa from international sports" by this UK organization.
- Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, US\$5,000 for office and personnel costs.
- Bern Declaration, US\$7,000 for support of this Swiss group's programme against bank loans to South Africa.

The special fund grants are covered by designated contributions, mainly from churches. Including the 1981 grants, US\$4,775,000 has been allocated from the fund since its first grants in 1970.

(more)



Six criteria govern the grants, including that the "purpose of the organizations must not be in conflict with the general purposes of the WCC...and the grants are to be used for humanitarian activities (i.e. social, health and educational purposes, legal aid, etc.)".

In addition "the grants are made without control of the manner in which they are spent, and are intended as an expression of commitment by the PCR to the cause of economic, social and political justice, which these organizations promote".

\* \* \* \* \*

NOTE: Descriptions of the 1981 grants, and/or a summary of the grants from 1970-1980 are available on request.

EPS

#### ZIMBABWE SALVATIONISTS CRITICIZE RESIGNATION FROM WORLD COUNCIL

Salisbury (EPS) - Last month's decision by the international Salvation Army to resign as a member of the World Council of Churches has prompted protests from Salvationists in Zimbabwe.

Colonel David Moyo, Salvation Army territorial commander for Zimbabwe, said "we see no conflict" between liberation movements which "fight for human rights" and "the gospel of love, charity and the liberation of the total man."

All Africa Press Service reported that about 75 Salvationists marched on Army headquarters here to urge a return to WCC membership.

The Army suspended its WCC membership following a 1978 grant by the WCC special fund to combat racism to the Patriotic Front in what was then Rhodesia. The front's eventually successful efforts led to independence for the nation as black-majority ruled Zimbabwe.

Target, a newspaper related to the National Christian Council of Kenya, reported similar unhappiness with the Army decision in that country.

In London, the Army issued a one-sentence statement. It said Moyo "has been in communication with the Salvation Army international headquarters pledging that the Salvation Army in Zimbabwe will maintain its 90-year tradition serving the spiritually and physically needy."

Moyo and 43 other Army leaders are scheduled to assemble in London 16 October as a High Council. Its chief purpose is to elect a successor to retiring Army General Arnold Brown.

Asked about other reaction to the Army decision from its 86-country membership, a spokesperson said "I haven't any information at all" about that. The spokesperson emphasized the importance the Army attaches to the "fraternal status" with the WCC which it requested and was granted in connection with the termination of its membership in August.

[Earlier story: EPS no. 23, page 3]

EPS

WORLD YWCA CONVENES  
REFUGEE CONSULTATION

Bulawayo, Zimbabwe (EPS) - Firsthand accounts by former refugee women and a visit to a camp for returnees gave immediacy to a World YWCA Consultation on Refugee Service here [22-31 August].

The Consultation brought together 40 women from 22 countries to get a fresh perspective on the global refugee situation and assess refugee programmes. Participants heard from staff and volunteers working with YWCA refugee services in Thailand, Jerusalem, the USA, Sweden, Botswana and Zimbabwe, and from YWCA volunteers working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Africare in Somalia.

Participants paid special attention to the needs of refugee women and girls. (The majority of refugees are women and children.) UNHCR and Zimbabwean officials who addressed the meeting said that Zimbabwe had resettled most of the 250 000 refugees and 850 000 persons displaced within the country.

One of two Zimbabwean ex-refugees who took part in the consultation, Cassiah Matiashe, described initial hardships in the Mozambique camp to which she fled as a school girl in 1977. "As many as 50 people died every day," she said. "It was not unusual to wake and find the person sharing your blanket had died."

Rodah Matsibanane, another returnee, recounted the murder of her brother, a rural storekeeper, by Rhodesian forces during the independence struggle, the burning of her parents' home, the deadly bombing of the column of refugees and combatants she joined to escape the country, and the strafing that continued in refugee camps in Zambia.

"They say the refugee problem is over but people are still suffering," Matsibanane said. Finding jobs is especially difficult for former liberation fighters as private industry is reluctant to hire the very men they fought against, she said.

Besides the two Zimbabweans, the consultation heard from several other refugees and displaced persons. From their own experiences, the speakers said refugee women require such things as communication, sympathy and counselling. YWCA associations in the USA, Jerusalem and Sweden (YWCA/YMCA) reported on special efforts to break through the isolation of refugee women in their communities.

The consultation also talked about personnel and financial resources for refugee work, educational campaign, and ways of providing assistance to refugees in conjunction with other non-governmental organizations. Consultation participants also discussed underlying causes of refugees such as drought, poverty, and the deprivation of human rights. Although Western countries have generated few refugees, in contrast to Africa's five million, the West has created refugees in the Third World through racial and economic oppression, they argued.

- Ellen Clark \*

\* Ellen Clark is communications officer with the World YWCA, Geneva.



SOUTH AFRICA CHURCH COUNCIL  
CALLS CHARGES A 'SMEAR'

Johannesburg(EPS)- The South African Council of Churches has charged a government official with using "smear tactics" against it. SACC President P.J. Storey reacted to remarks in parliament by Louis Le Grange, the South African minister of police.

Le Grange said SACC Secretary General Desmond Tutu and the SACC seek to "undermine the morale and preparedness of the police force and the defence force" because they "initiate and support projects created to support national service dodgers and deserters, at the same time supporting organizations involved in civil disobedience."

In reply, Storey said SACC allegiance is "with no political party or movement," but with "Christ, the lord of the church." He said it is committed to non-violent efforts to change the South African system of apartheid (race separation), but "we can understand those whose frustration has led to an abandonment of peaceful methods."

EPS

LESOTHO CHURCH LEADERS  
DEAD, MISSING, ARRESTED

Maseru, Lesotho (EPS) - One church leader is dead, another in custody, and a third missing in this small southern African country.

Edgar Motuba, editor of the Christian newspaper Leselinyana and chair of the Christian Council of Lesotho migrant labour commission was taken from his house by unknown persons 7 September. He was later found dead by a road near the South African border, along with two friends kidnapped with him.

Litsietsi Putsoa, a member of the CCL executive committee, was taken from his house early in the morning of 6 September. The police later confirmed that he is in their custody for questioning, but is allowed no visitors or other outside contact.

Missing is Benjamin Masilo, president of the CCL and vice-president of the Lesotho Evangelical Church. He is also a member of the opposition Basutho Congress Party. His three-year-old grandson was killed by his abductors.

A report from the Nairobi-based All Africa Press Service noted that Lesotho Prime Minister Jonathan Lebua has "repeatedly attacked the Protestant Church in the country, whose members have called for democratic elections."

In Geneva, the World Council of Churches sent a telegram to the church and the CCL referring to its "great alarm" at news about the three men, offering "appropriate assistance," and sharing "support and prayers."

A letter from J.C. Morojele, executive secretary of the Lesotho church, requested prayers for Masilo's return alive. "It is a puzzle to us," he wrote, "why Mr. Masilo and his family became the victims of this fierce, malicious, and brutal attack."

EPS

PAPAL LETTER ON LABOR:  
UNIONS 'INDISPENSABLE'

Rome (EPS) - Pope John Paul II has issued his third encyclical letter. Titled "Laborem Exercens," it says the right to form labor unions is "an indispensable element" of modern industrial society.

Sent to the world's Roman Catholic bishops, the document sets forth current church teaching on labour in about 25,000 words in five chapters. It makes no specific mention of current events in the pope's native Poland, but it does call for "new movements of solidarity" as part of efforts to achieve social justice.

The encyclical rejects both "rigid capitalism" and "simply making the means of production state property." The pontiff says that "the Christian tradition has never maintained the right to private property as an absolute and un-touchable right. On the contrary, it has placed it in its broadest context of the common right of all to the goods of all creation."

Affirming the rights of workers to form unions, the pope calls them "a mouth-piece for the struggle for social justice" and not merely "a reflection of the class structure of society". He adds that they must "not be subjected to the decision of political parties or have close links with them." Otherwise, he suggests, they might "easily lose contact with their specific role, which is to secure the just rights of workers within the framework of the common good of the whole of society."

Referring to technological developments such as automation and miniaturization, the pope condemns situation in which they have led to violations of workers' human rights instead of insuring "authentic progress."

He affirms the right to strike "as an extreme means," but warns against abuses. "It must never be forgotten", he writes, that, when essential community services are in question, they must in every case be ensured, if necessary by means of appropriate legislation....

"Abuse of the strike weapon can lead to the paralysis of the whole of socio-economic life, and this is contrary to the requirements of the common good of society ..." he adds.

EPS



CONVERSION TO ISLAM BY  
INDIAN HINDUS INCREASES

Meenakshipuram, (Tamil Nadu), India (EPS) - There were at one time several instances of mass conversions to Christianity. The converts, for the most part, came from the ranks of low-caste Hindus. They used to be known as "untouchables"; today they are called 'Harijans' - "people of God" - a term popularised by Mahatma Gandhi.

Not many Harijans are converted to Christianity these days, but considerable numbers are embracing Islam. They make no secret of the fact that they leave the Hindu fold in order to escape the many social discriminations to which they are still subjected.

The wave of conversions started here in this small village in southern India. Last February some 600 Harijans, over half the population of the village, accepted Islam. The movement caught on, and groups of people in other villages have since then gone over to Islam. Among the new converts, unlike in the old days of conversion to Christianity, there are quite a number of educated and well-to-do people.

Hindu leaders are understandably concerned over this new wave of conversions. They have held a number of conferences, and even managed to persuade a few small groups to go back to the Hindu fold. Any large-scale change of religion is bound to create social tensions, and the government of India is also concerned over the wave of conversions.

How does the Indian church react to all this ? The situation is embarrassing for the church; a number of new converts have said to reporters that they prefer Islam to Christianity because discrimination on the basis of caste considerations is as prevalent among Christians as among Hindus.

T.K. Thomas \*

\* T.K. Thomas became World Council of Churches publications editor in August. Prior to that, he was communications secretary for the Christian Conference of Asia. His longer report on the Indian conversions is scheduled for the November issue of the WCC magazine One World.

ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches have sent three planeloads of food and other relief supplies to Luanda, Angola. They are meant for refugees in that country in the wake of the military action in its southern section by Southern Africa.

The headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Belfast, were severely damaged by a bomb blast. Damage was estimated at more than UK£ 200,000.

Ion Rosianu, Romanian state secretary for religious affairs, visited Geneva in September [15-22]. His trip included visits to the World Council of Churches and other organizations at the Ecumenical Centre, where he discussed the country's church-state relations. Four Romanian churches - Eastern Orthodox, Reformed, and two Lutheran - belong to the WCC.

The 12th annual national conference of Roman Catholic priests in England and Wales has urged (43-9 with 12 abstentions) the Roman Catholic Church in those parts of the UK to state clearly that "to build and hold" nuclear weapons is "morally wrong and should be condemned." It also urged (60-2 with two abstentions) that Friday become a day of "true self-denial" with savings going for third world development work.

EPS

ECUTEXT: Resolution of the World Methodist Conference \*

Methodist Churches throughout the world have had a central role in the formation, support, and leadership of the World Council of Churches since its beginning in 1948; and are significantly involved with more than 300..... member churches in seeking to fulfill the purpose of the Council in making Jesus Christ known as God and Saviour through ecumenical witness.

Methodists should be alert to misrepresentation about the World Council of Churches and should be knowledgeable about and support the WCC in its extensive work of world mission and evangelism, its massive aid to refugees from natural disasters and human divisiveness, its aid to development, its contribution to theological education and faith and order disciplines, its dialogue with persons of other living faiths, its community of women and men studies, its significant programme to combat racism, its role in administering funds for specific causes designated by any of its member churches, the global work of its medical commission, its defence of human rights, and its support for the visible unity of the church in every nation.

We strongly encourage each of our member churches to participate in Bible Study and other preparatory work for the July 24 - August 10, 1983 Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver. ...

\*The resolution was approved on the final day of the WMC meeting in Honolulu. [Story: EPS no. 21, page 7].



## ECUTEXT: Foreign Banks &amp; South African Apartheid\*

South Africa itself is the first to acknowledge that the support received from major western nations in the form of investments, bank loans, and transfers of technology and expertise, enables the apartheid state to continue. Because this external support is so important, the international community is seeking to terminate foreign economic relations with South Africa as the most effective means by which to peacefully assist the liberation struggle inside South Africa.

Foreign banks have a long history of relations with South Africa. More recently, they have become a major source of the capital necessary to underwrite the costs of a military programme which has quadrupled its budget in the last decade.

The Bank for International Settlements reports that in June 1980, foreign banks had US\$ 7.3 billion outstanding to South African borrowers with an additional US\$ 2.8 billion in undisbursed credit commitments. In 1980, despite the enormous surplus balance of payments brought about by the increase in the gold price, South Africa returned to the foreign capital markets to borrow more than it had in any one year period since 1976. Since 1978 at least, German and Swiss banks have by far the largest lenders.

One of the main arguments used by the banks in defending their loans to South Africa is that the decision to make loans is guided by neutral business criteria which have no political connotations. Such a position completely denies the fact that any dealings with South Africa at this point in history have profound political ramifications. This was perhaps best summed up by General Secretary Desmond Tutu of the South African Council of Churches in March 1981 when he said, "Foreign investors must know they are investing to buttress one of the most vicious systems since nazism."

It is particularly true of bank loans to South Africa which are made to the central government; the Strategic Oil Fund, which oversees the procurement and development of the oil which fuels the South African military; for the South African Railways and Harbours Authority which ensures troop and armament mobility; and for the Electricity Supply Commission (Escom) developing South Africa's nuclear capability. These are only a few of the most blatant examples of the type of military support given by foreign banks under the guise of "political neutrality."

Each of the banks which are classified by the WCC as "acceptable" were judged to be so on the basis of either having made no loans to South Africa or having issued a statement declaring that no more loans to the government or parastatals would be made in the future. By contrast, the "unacceptable" banks are deeply involved in financing South Africa in a number of ways:

The Union Bank of Switzerland maintains a representative office in Johannesburg and, together with its subsidiaries, participated in at least 38 different loans to South Africa between 1972 and 1981. In 29 of these cases the Bank acted as a manager of the loan. These identifiable loans, which totalled US\$ 1,479.4m., comprised numerous credits of a military and nuclear nature to borrowers such as the government, the Strategic Oil Fund, the South African Railways and Harbours, and the South African Airlines. Escom alone received nearly US\$ 300m. in loans. Since the events in Soweto, UBS has been involved in loans totalling US\$ 727m., including a US\$ 15.4m. loan to the Iron and Steel Corporation (Iscor) in March 1981. The bank is now considering putting an end to its activities in South Africa.

Dresdner Bank also maintains a representative office in Johannesburg and has been identified as participating in 27 loans totalling nearly US\$ 1.4 billion to South Africa between 1972 and 1980. It has acted as a manager for 17 of the 27 loans, including all of the six loans made since the Soweto uprisings. The Bank has participated in US\$ 882.4m. of loans to South African borrowers of a military nature and nearly US\$ 300m. to Escom. In 1980 alone it managed US\$ 370 million of loans to the government of South Africa and Escom. Dresdner Bank has not responded to any WCC inquiries or correspondence and has never made a policy statement on South Africa.

Swiss Bank Corporation has a representative office in Johannesburg. Between 1972 and 1981 the Bank participated in 27 loans valued at US\$ 954m., of which it managed 14. Of that total amount, approximately US\$ 400m. went to borrowers of a direct or indirect military intent and more than US\$ 450 went to Escom alone. Swiss Bank Corporation has made nine loans to South Africa since Soweto, the most recent being a US\$ 56.1m. loan to Escom in January 1981. The Bank claims that their relations with South Africa are based on the "generally accepted principles of normal and customary international banking practices" and are therefore unwilling to take a no-loans position on South Africa.

\* A longer version of this briefing paper was issued by the World Council of Churches in connection with the WCC decision to end relations with three banks doing business in South Africa [Stories: pages 1,2.]

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 2 OCTOBER 1981



WORLD'S CHURCHES AID  
CHINA FLOOD VICTIMS

Geneva (EPS) - The world service commission of the World Council of Churches has given the League of Red Cross Societies here US\$ 150,000 for flood relief in China.

Described as an initial response, the cheque includes funds from church agencies in Hong Kong [Christian Council], New Zealand [Christian World Service], Federal Republic of Germany [Brot für die Welt], Netherlands [ADB], Thailand [Church of Christ], UK [Christian Aid, Salvation Army], and USA [Church World Service].

The floods have swept six Chinese provinces, leaving 1.5 million homeless, at least 750 dead and about 30,000 injured. Roads and rail lines have been widely disrupted.

EPS

NEW WORLD COUNCIL-VATICAN  
CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETS

Rome (EPS) - A new vehicle for cooperation between the World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church held its first meeting here [17-18 September].

The Joint Consultative Group on Social Thought and Action includes some aspects of the work of SODEPAX, whose activity ended last year. [Story: EPS no. 22/1980, page 10]. The communiqué from the new group notes that it has a "broader mandate and a wider spectrum of collaborators" than SODEPAX.

Highlighted in the communiqué was the group's attention to peace questions, including fostering an "ecumenical consensus on peace and disarmament that would lead toward catechetical and pastoral activity to voice the churches' concerns in a positive and effective way."

Other areas of concern listed were church aid and relief activities, spiritual formation and education toward Christian involvement in social action, and ways to clarify moral and ethical issues to enable common Christian witness.

WCC participants included staff related to international affairs, development, combatting racism, education, inter-church aid, refugees and world service. Roman Catholic participants came from Vatican bodies dealing with justice and peace, the laity, Christian unity, and development. The group's co-moderators are Pierre Duprey, undersecretary of the Vatican Christian unity secretariat, and Julio de Santa Ana, director of the WCC development commission. The group's next meeting is set for 23-24 February in Geneva.

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NOTE: The text of the group's communiqué is available on request.

EPS

ANGLICAN COUNCIL ACTS  
ON ECUMENICAL MATTERS

Newcastle (England) UK (EPS) - The fifth Anglican Consultative Council dealt with several ecumenical concerns at its meeting here [8-18 September].

The ACC resolved to ask its 27 autonomous member churches around the world if the final report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), to be published next year, is "consonant in substance with the faith of Anglicans" and a "sufficient basis for taking the next concrete step towards the reconciliation of our churches grounded in agreement in faith." [Earlier story: EPS no. 24, page 6 ].

Responses from Anglican governing bodies are expected over the next several years.

In terms of Anglican relationships with other Christian traditions, the council:

-- asked the Lutheran World Federation to establish a joint working group to assess regional Lutheran-Anglican dialogues.

-- Urged Anglicans to work for consensus on the status of the phrase in the Nicene Creed which affirms that the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Son. That "filioque" clause is not used by Orthodox and has been on the agenda of Anglican-Eastern Orthodox theological discussions.

-- Endorsed a visit by Canadian Anglican Bishop Henry Hill, who co-chairs the Anglican-Eastern Orthodox dialogue, to leaders of Oriental Orthodoxy.

-- Asked its standing committee to find ways to forge better links with Old Catholic, United, and other churches with which Anglicans are in full communion.

The council sent a message of concern and prayer to the churches in Angola, Namibia, and South Africa "abhorring the continuance of suffering in Angola and oppression in Namibia and South Africa" as a result of "the intransigence of the apartheid regime of South Africa."

The council also commended for worldwide Anglican study questions grouped in 12 areas of concern - spirituality, the gospel, violence, urban society, other faiths and ideologies, young people, world resources, technological developments, power and protest, racism, justice and peace.

It urged additional study of the concept of the collegiality of bishops, and approved a constitution for a new province of Anglican dioceses in Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina, to be inaugurated next May.

EPS



CHURCHES SET HELSINKI  
ACCORDS CONSULTATIONS

Croydon (England) UK (EPS) - The first of three regional consultations on "Christianity, human rights, and confidence building" is scheduled here in October [3-8]. This north Europe meeting is to be followed by a North America consultation next February and one for south and central Europe next June.

The meetings are sponsored by the Churches' Human Rights Programme for the Implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, a five-year activity of the Conference of European Churches, the National Council of Churches [USA] and the Canadian Council of Churches. The three organisations include members in countries party to the Helsinki accords on European security and cooperation.

An announcement about the consultations describes their purpose as "to establish a more solid common base in coming to grips with human rights and to plan effective and joint action across international and ideological frontiers."

Among issues on the first consultation agenda are work/unemployment, religious freedom, and the right to information.

EPS

METHODIST GATHERING  
CONDEMNS APARTHEID

Johannesburg (EPS) - Obedience 81, a weeklong gathering here of southern Africa Methodists, has called on "every Methodist to reject apartheid," the system of race separation in South Africa.

The 800 delegates were described as the largest and most representative gathering of Methodists in their 165-year history in this part of the world. Press reports indicated that the early days of the session were marked by deep divisions between blacks and whites on the relationship of the church to political activities.

"Tensions were building up after a few days as some delegates were privately threatening to leave the conference," the Sunday Express reported. "Whites felt they were being insulted and humiliated while radical blacks again believed that nothing concrete was achieved."

In the end, however, delegates unanimously accepted, with almost no debate, a message from and a list of concerns of the conference, including the unequivocal rejection of apartheid.

"God seeks a free South Africa," says a portion of the message, "delivered from the violence of oppression, revolution and war. ... What we have heard convicts us that every Methodist must witness against this disease which infects all our people and leaves none unscathed in our church and country...."

"We have experienced," it continues, "how hard it is to abandon long-held prejudice and long-felt bitterness. But we have seen God work this miracle in us. It happened because we continued to search for each other even at our time of deepest division and despair."

EPS

CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT'S  
CHURCH TIES CONSIDERED

Geneva (EPS) - Effects on the church of the charismatic movement within it were considered at a recent Finnish Lutheran conference and in a new English Anglican report.

In Lohja, Archbishop Mikko Juva, head of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, told an international Lutheran charismatic leaders meeting that he sees positive benefit to his church in the movement. Olli Valtonen, editor of a Finnish Christian newspaper, told the group that "commitment to our church means new reconciliation, healing the wounds of the Reformation."

Karachi Bishop Arne Rudvin of the Church of Pakistan said that in his country, "charismatics have totally identified with the local church and have worked for reconciliation."

In London, a new report from a Church of England working party says the movement has powerful lessons for the rest of the church, even though some difficulties need to be overcome.

It also observes that in recent years, there has been a softening of "somewhat polarised positions" on the subject, with more attempts to maintain real fellowship between charismatics and those who do not identify with the movement.

EPS

CHURCH SAID DIVIDED BY  
100TH ANNIVERSARY PLAN

Johannesburg (EPS) - The (mixed race) Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa is seriously and deeply divided about plans for a festival marking the 100th anniversary of its formation, according to a report from the South African Council of Churches.

The report says the scheduled presence of the South African state president, and what some consider undue special prominence planned for leaders of the (white) Dutch Reformed Church during the weeklong festival in October are particular points at issue.

A five-person protest committee is urging that the atmosphere of the commemoration be more prayerful and sorrowful because the establishment of a separate denomination for mixed-race persons was a forerunner of the current white minority government's apartheid (race separation) policy.

Protests of the plans have also included church committee resignations and calls for a boycott of the event.

EPS



PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING CHURCHES  
IN AFRICA MEET IN MOZAMBIQUE

Maputo, Mozambique (EPS) - A second conference of representatives of churches from Portuguese-speaking portions of Africa (Mozambique, Angola, Cape Verde, and Sao Tomé e Príncipe) met here for a week in September [17-22].

The meeting considered questions related to the role of the church in post-colonial society, among them Christianity and Marxism, African theological perspectives, public health, agriculture, evangelisation, and support for government programs to help people in need.

At the opening session of the conference, Secretary General Isaac David Mahlalela of the Christian Council of Mozambique stressed the active participation of churches in building new societies, a role, he said, that was not possible prior to independence

The first of these conferences was held in 1979.

EPS

GERMAN-S.AFRICAN CHURCH  
MEETING BRINGS CRITICISM

Johannesburg (EPS) - The Broederkring, a organisation of ministers in the three non-white Dutch Reformed churches in South Africa, says the (white) Dutch Reformed Church in that country is viewed by the white-minority government of South-Africa as "one of its agencies or tools to present and promote its policy overseas." Moreover, adds its statement, DRC leaders "choose voluntarily to fulfil this role."

The Broederkring criticism followed a visit to German church people by DRC and other South African church leaders, financed, reports the South African Council of Churches, by a German public relations firm under contract to the South African government.

Following the meeting, a member of the South African delegation suggested German appreciation for a white South African theological position which does not oppose apartheid (race separation). The Germans later expressed bewilderment at how the South Africans drew that conclusion.

The Broederkring statement added that the "naive willingness" of the German church people to dialogue with the South African delegation is "callously and successfully exploited" by the DRC and the government "to gain further credibility and support for the government policy."

EPS

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The British Council of Churches plans to send a three-person delegation to China in December in response to an invitation from the Christian Council there. It is the first official BCC visit since formal relationships between Chinese and British churches ended in 1950.

Steps have been taken to form a new interdenominational Christian student movement in the USA. An ecumenical student conference meeting for five days in Berkeley (California) resolved that efforts toward the new movement should be "committed to ecumenical participation and witness to the local, national, and global mission in the proclamation of the gospel." The USA University Christian Movement disbanded in 1969.

The Russian Orthodox Church has begun preparations for the 1000th anniversary of the acceptance of Christianity in Russia, in 1988. The preparation committee, chaired by Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and all Russia, recently held its first meeting.

The Federation of Evangelical Churches in the German Democratic Republic has a new head. Bishop Werner Krusche (Magdeburg) succeeds the retiring Bishop Albrecht Schönherr (Berlin-Brandenburg).

Kathpress, the Austrian Roman Catholic news agency, reports that the cardinal primate of Hungary, Laszlo Lekai, reassigned a priest to a rural parish after he outlined his pacifist views at a youth gathering, even though the cardinal told him not to. The priest had been assigned to youth work in Budapest. The agency put the case in the context of what it described as growing approval for conscientious objection among some informal groups of young believers.

Heads of three church jurisdictions including Liverpool have defended a grant from the race relations unit of the British Council of Churches to the Liverpool 8 Defence Committee, working on behalf of persons arrested in connection with rioting there earlier this year. The statement from Bishop David Sheppard (Anglican) Archbishop Derek Worlock (Roman Catholic) and District Chairman Norman Denny (Methodist) said the UK£ 500 grant was a "gesture of help towards those who have felt alienated from the rest of the community." They added that while the giving of the grant has been called "taking a political stance... to have declined such a grant could well have earned the same charge."

The Roman Catholic bishops of Brazil have rejected views which seek to "reduce the mission of the church to the formulation of timeless principles." Saying that the church has "neither partisan political pretensions nor ambitions," the bishops add that "does not mean that it is apolitical," because that would mean "tacit acquiescence in whatever form of political power exists."

The London-based World Association for Christian Communication has re-elected General Secretary Hans Florin to a new four-year term beginning next 1 January. The West German Lutheran pastor is a former missions executive. As WACC chief administrative officer he directs communication work in more than 50 countries. WACC has also announced the one-year appointment of Lorna de Smidt, a South African living in exile in the United Kingdom, as its executive secretary for communication education. She succeeds Thelma Awori of Liberia.



ECUVIEW: The Situation in Nicaragua

A unique feature of the Nicaraguan revolution, has been the Christian participation in all of its phases, including the armed insurrection. Such participation has been an ecumenical one, with little difference made between Protestants and Catholics. A document released by the Nicaraguan bishops' conference soon after the revolution underlined the broad support which the church had given the revolutionary process. Recently, however, under the weight of the difficulties faced in the reconstruction, strains are beginning to appear, not only between church and state, but within the church itself.

The unity which exists between Christians and their non-Christian counterparts in Nicaragua cannot be overemphasized. For a visitor, it is an impressive experience, and one that restores hope in the possibility of unity in a divided world community, burdened by so many seemingly insurmountable contradictions. One has the feeling that there is a deliberate, defiant determination to violate dogmatic conventions with regard to social development towards a more just society. As one Christian in government said, "the Sandinist boys and girls are not Marxist in the European sense. They are basically activists with a keen sense of what is right and wrong".

There is no recognizable "persecution" of the church. Three Catholic priests are ministers of government; a score of others work in various levels of government. Four Sandinist comandantes, we were told, had recently had their children baptized. The Institute of Nicaraguan Cinema, under the Ministry of Culture, has produced a film called "Gracias a Dios y a la Revolucion", about Christian participation in the revolution. Radio time is given on the Sandinist station for church programmes on Sundays.

And now, to top it all off, the new Nicaraguan coins sport not only the portrait of General Sandino, but also a slogan that has not heretofore been popular among Marxist revolutionaries: "En Dios Confiamos", "In God We Trust".

Such blatant unorthodoxy is not only disconcerting to traditional Communists; it is also being strongly opposed by some of the Roman Catholic hierarchy who have had second thoughts about their initially positive statement in support of the revolution immediately after its triumph.

Within the Christian community this has started a kind of ideological struggle between those opting for a pluralistic democracy along traditional Western models, and those committed to a new socialist experiment. Just as alarming is the intense Evangelical offensive of fundamentalist Protestant sects, coming mostly from the USA, like the evangelist Morris Cerrullo, who promised to exorcize the devil who has taken possession of Nicaragua.

- Eric Weingärtner & Charles Harper \*

\*The authors visited Central America for three weeks earlier this year. Weingärtner is a programme secretary in the WCC international affairs commission. Harper is WCC secretary for Latin American human rights resources. This is an edited excerpt of their longer report, available on request. The introduction to it describes their findings as a "contribution to the ongoing concern of the ecumenical fellowship of churches for this critical area of the world. Christians and churches have shared in the suffering and participated significantly in the struggle for just solutions to the region's many problems."

ECUTEXT: Communique on the Visit of the  
Romanian State Secretary for Religious Affairs

The State Secretary for Religious Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Mr. Ion Rosianu, made a three day visit from September 16 to 20 to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva at the invitation of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches.

In an opening address to the staff of the Ecumenical Centre, Mr. Rosianu described the relationship between religious bodies and the state in his country. He traced the evolution of that relationship and the "climate of mutual respect and active co-operation" that exists among the fourteen religious bodies in Romania.

In his address and in subsequent conversations with staff, Mr. Rosianu expressed special interest in questions of international development and a new economic order, the search for peace and disarmament, the role of world-wide Christian organisations in the education of youth in a spirit of understanding and friendship. The discussions also covered the possibilities of dialogue between religion and ideology in a socialist context.

"In present circumstances, with the deterioration of the international situation", said Mr. Rosianu, "we regard it as more urgent than ever that the churches should unite their efforts and, together with the nations in which they are set, rise up resolutely against war and the arms race and in defence of the most fundamental right of peoples - the right to life, the right to peace, the right to a free and independent existence."

In conversations with Mr. Rosianu, WCC General Secretary Dr Philip Potter and other World Council staff, attention was given to the development of structures to promote local ecumenism in Romania and to strengthen provision for theological education and Christian witness.

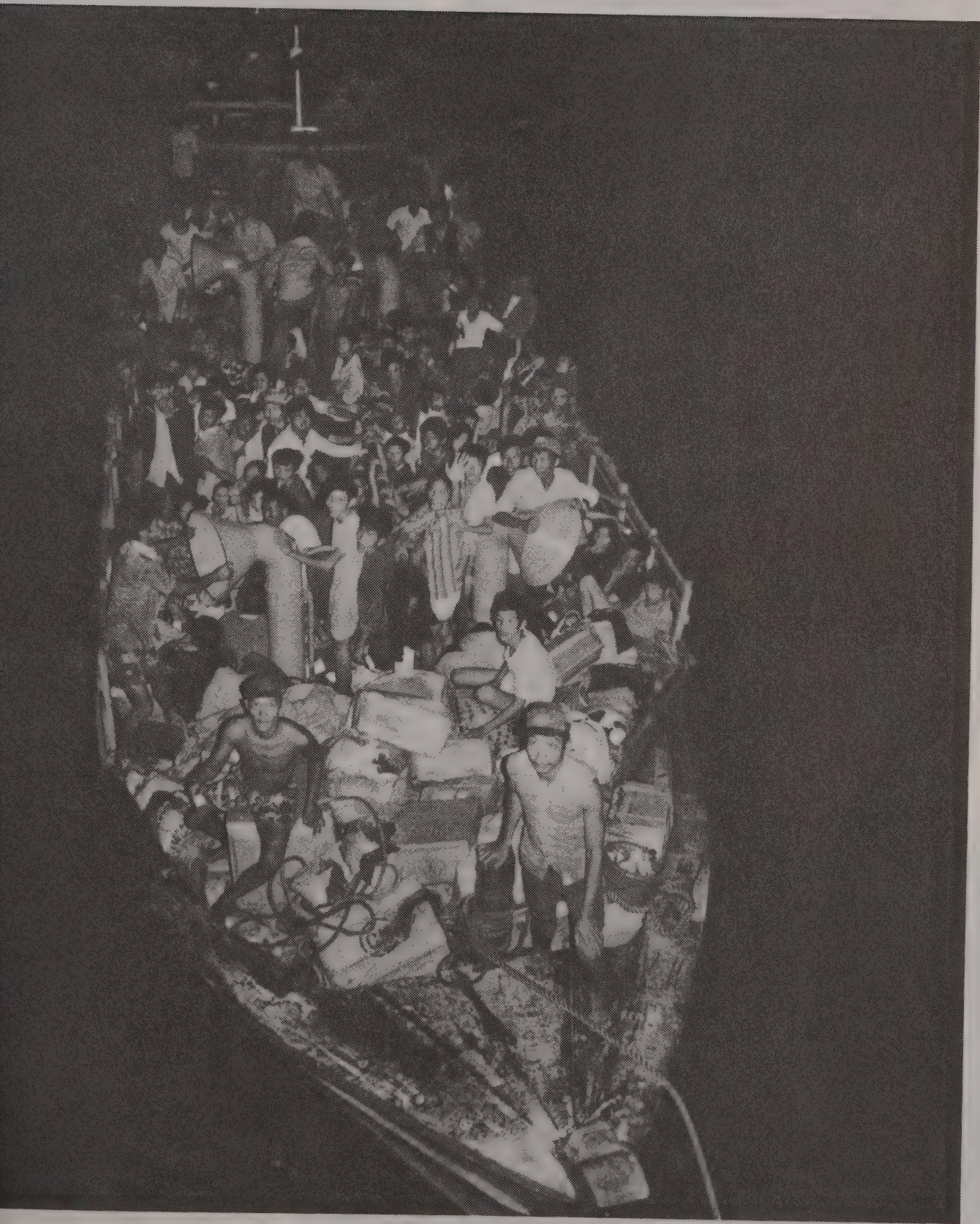
Mr. Rosianu's visit was the first such occasion since his predecessor's visit in 1973. The State Secretary was accompanied by Mr. Ion Negoii, deputy director of the foreign relations section in Mr. Rosianu's department. The visit reflects Romanian recognition of the role played by the World Council and other international Christian organisations.

The contribution of the churches to the work of building modern Romania was recognised by Mr. Rosianu during his visit. It was clear from the discussions that churches in his country also support and appreciate the strong concern of the Romanian state for national unity and independence and its desire for more flexible strategy in foreign relationships.



OCTOBER 1981

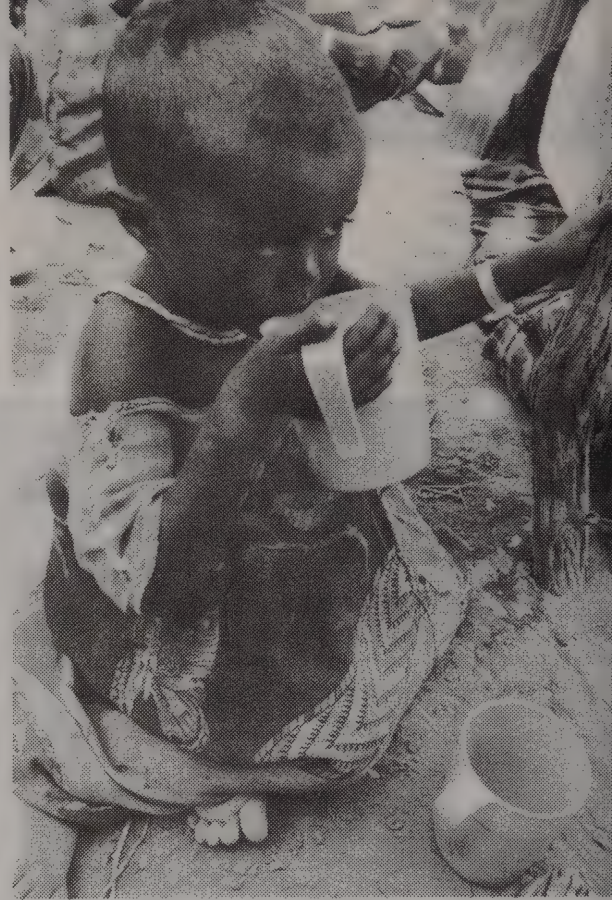
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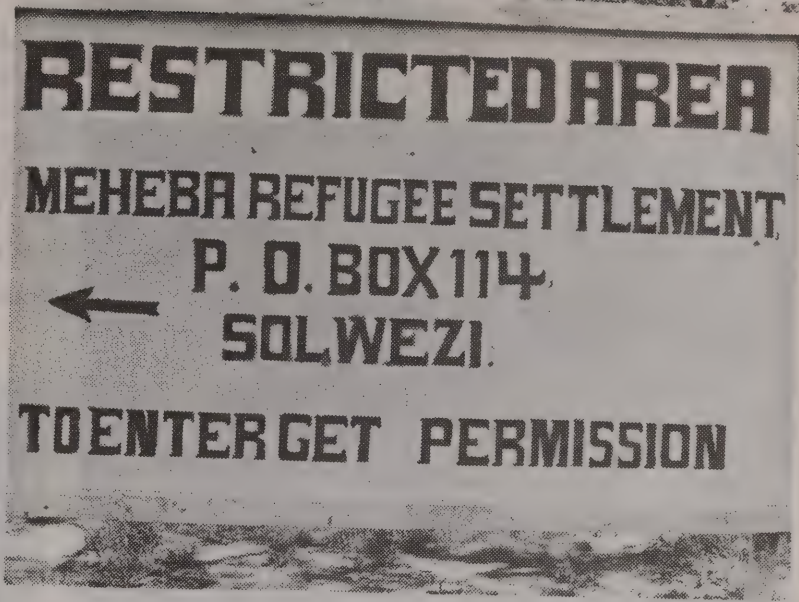
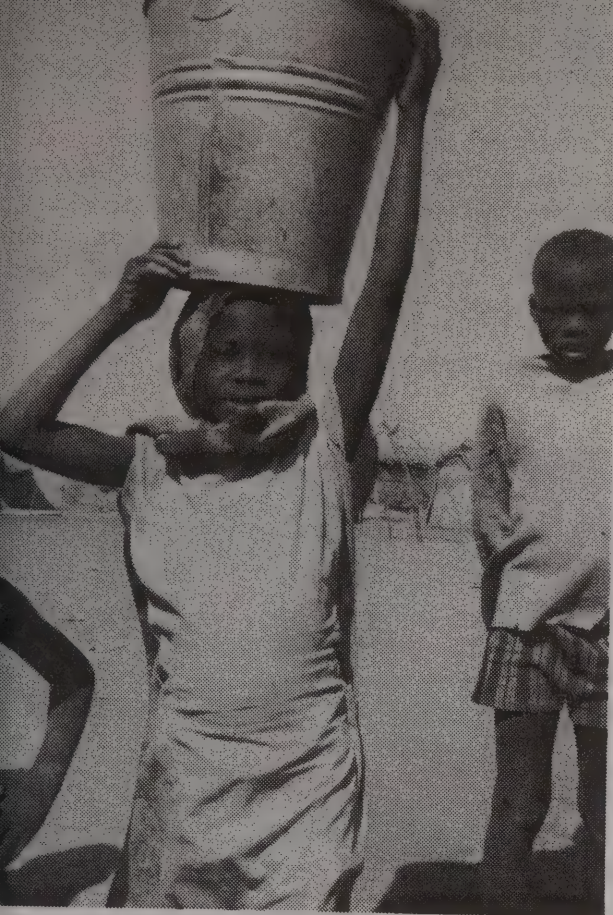
## FOCUS



(2695)

The situation of refugees the world is a major and of concern of the church's wo At the end of August, the YWCA held a weeklong refug consultation in Zimbabwe [ EPS no.25 , page 6 ]. Also August, the agendas of the assembly of the All Africa ference of Churches and th central committee of the W Council of Churches includ refugee questions. [Storie EPS no.21 , page 4 ; no.24 page 5 ]. The WCC, AACC an Lutheran World Federation a refugee consultation in zania at the end of Octobe





(2698)

## REFUGEEES

1) Indochinese boat people seek a new life.

2) Kampuchean refugees arrive in Thailand.

3) Afghan refugees set up makeshift shelters in Pakistan.

4) Vietnamese refugees wash at a center in the Philippines.

5) A little Ethiopian refugee is nourished in Somalia.

6) In Cameroon, a Chadian refugee fetches water.

7) A sign in Zambia marks a resettlement center for Angolan refugees.

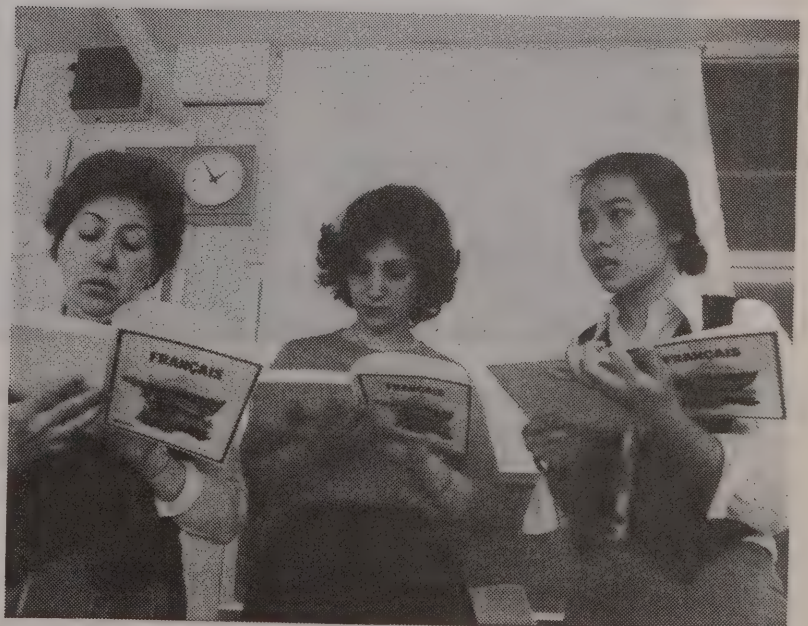
8) In Zimbabwe, former refugees return to their village of origin.

9) A Vietnamese refugee in Canada attends class.

Source: UNHCR, Geneva



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(2700)



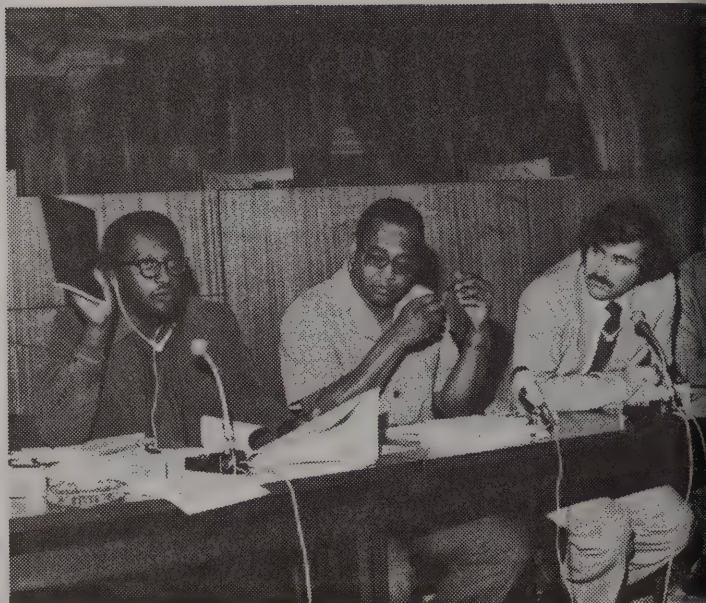
(2701, 2702): In September World Council of Churches officials announced the ending of relations with three banks whose involvement in South Africa was considered unacceptably major [Stories: EPS no.25, pages 1,2]. Discussing the decision with assembled journalists were (from the left), Anwar

Barkat, director of the WCC Programme to Combat racism; Prexy Nesbit, PCR programme secretary; Philip Potter, WCC general secretary; John Bluck, WCC communication director; and Wesley Kenworthy, WCC assistant general secretary for finance and administration.

Photos: John Taylor, WCC



(2701)



(2702)



(2703)

(2703): Also in September at the Ecumenical Centre, headquarters of the WCC and other organisations, Ion Rosianu (right), Romanian state secretary for religious affairs, visited several officials, including WCC general secretary Philip Potter (center) and Metropolitan Antonie, member of the WCC central committee and Romanian Orthodox hierarch.



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2 October 1981

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 16 OCTOBER 1981

CHURCH AID APPEALS OF  
US\$ 3.3 MILLION MADE

Geneva (EPS) - Appeals for more than US\$ 3.3 million to aid four regions or countries have been issued by the world service commission of the World Council of Churches, based here.

The largest appeal is for US\$ 2.5 million for "humanitarian needs of civilian populations, displaced communities and internal refugees" in El Salvador, Guatemala, and neighboring Central American countries.

Commission director Jean Fischer says in a cover letter that "churches have become outstanding targets of repression. Religious leaders and laypeople are being killed by security forces and paramilitary groups in both countries. Others, together with peasants and trade union leaders, have fled their countries under threat of death."

He adds that as organised opposition to the military authorities is becoming stronger and more unified, there are "few signs of any substantial agreements by the authorities to accept a dialogue with the opposition. Christian churches, communities, and agencies are trying to cope, meanwhile, with the sufferings of the people."

Another appeal, for US\$ 500,000, has been made by the commission for material aid for Poland for the November-March phase of an on-going program [See EPS no.21 , page 8 ].

Fischer reports that Polish churches in cooperation with the Polish Ecumenical Council "have developed an effective system for the distribution of food supplies and other materials to church and state institutions and homes. The expression of solidarity shown by churches and related agencies has been an important contribution much appreciated by all concerned."

For Lesotho, a small southern African country, US\$ 250,000 is asked to help reconstruct two high schools of the Lesotho Evangelical Church. They were seriously damaged by repeated, unexplained fires.

A fourth appeal, for US\$ 72,000, is to help victims of recent ethnic violence in Sri Lanka.

EPS



MILLION ANGOLANS CALLED  
REFUGEES IN OWN COUNTRY

Luanda, Angola (EPS) - Africa Church Information Service reports a million Angolans are "refugees in their own country" because of South African military action there.

The ACIS report says the "scale of destitution... is far worse than had been imagined." It adds that "unless international relief organisations can find an effective system of assessing and providing for the needs of the Angolan refugees, hundreds might die from starvation and exposure."

ACIS also calls the refugee situation in Zambia "critical". Some Angolan refugees have fled there, but "relief supplies cannot reach them because roads into the region have been mined, and South African troops continue to patrol large areas," ACIS reports.

EPS

ROMAN CATHOLICS, DISCIPLES  
COMPLETE FIVE-YEAR DIALOGUE

Arfert, Ireland (EPS) - The official international theological dialogue between Roman Catholics and Disciples of Christ has completed its final report after five years of meetings.

Paul Crow Jr., ecumenical officer of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) [USA], and co-chairperson of the 16-person dialogue commission, said the group outlined a consensus on the nature of church unity, church division, baptism, faith and tradition. He estimated dialogue results would take another five years to influence congregational life.

"We discovered that Disciples and Roman Catholics have much more in common than we anticipated," Crow said. "We have always presumed we were eons apart, but like so many assumptions of a divided church, it didn't really hold up."

Crow predicted that the dialogue would be influential in Roman Catholic international conversations with Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, and Reformed representatives.

He said the dialogue between the two traditions was "unique... because we concentrated on the nature of the future relationship that may someday be given to us... There is no question that someday there will be communion between Roman Catholics and Disciples and other churches. But there is a great deal of dialogue and agony to come between now and then."

Crow projected another round of dialogue to "tackle the difficult questions still before us on the nature of the church, the Lord's Supper and the ministry, especially the papacy."

EPS

CHURCH NUCLEAR HEARING  
PARTICIPANTS ANNOUNCED

Amsterdam (EPS) - Speakers, witnesses, and members of the hearing group have been announced for the International Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament, sponsored here by the World Council of Churches 23-27 November.

Former Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, now chairperson of the Independent Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues, is to give an opening address. Members of the hearing group include retired general T.B. Simatupang, former chief of staff of the Indonesian Armed Forces. He is currently president of the Indonesian Council of Churches. Others on the list of 18 members include Gwendoline Konie, Zambia's permanent representative to the United Nations; and former USA senator John Culver, now consultant to the Union of Concerned Scientists on arms control issues.

The witnesses will be questioned by panel members on political aspects of nuclear escalation, current doctrines concerning the use of nuclear weapons, approaches to disarmament and non-proliferation, and related issues. Among the approximately 25 witnesses scheduled are K. Subramanyam, director of the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses in New Delhi; Belgian Dominican theologian Edward Schillebeeckx, theology professor at the University of Nijmegen; and former USA special presidential assistant for national security affairs McGeorge Bundy. He is now history professor at New York University.

The hearing is organised by the WCC international affairs commission and the WCC church and society sub-unit. The hearing was called for by the 1980 meeting of WCC central committee, which said that "developments in recent years have brought the world closer to the brink of a nuclear war. Unless the present trends are reversed or immediately halted, a nuclear war is now a distinct possibility."

EPS

EUROPE'S CHURCH AID EFFORTS  
SAID CHALLENGED BY AFRICANS

Zeist, Netherlands (EPS) - A meeting of Africa secretaries of European church-related fund raising agencies here [16-18 September] says African churches have challenged Europeans to change some of their procedures and assumptions.

Reacting to a report on the August general assembly of the All Africa Conference of Churches, the Africa secretaries noted concerns that "witness and evangelism as priority concerns of the churches in Africa do not receive adequate attention compared to the support given to service and development projects. A sharp division between the commitment to mission and the commitment to service is viewed as being disruptive to the life of the church."

The European church aid officials also spoke of a challenge to insure that relationships "go beyond the sharing of material resources." An example cited was reaction to the South African military action in Angola. "While it is... desirable," they said, "to assist with financial means... it is even more important that churches in the West publicly express their solidarity and indignation."

EPS



## RESTRICTIONS ON CHURCH IN FRANCOPHONE AFRICA NOTED

Yaounde, Cameroon (EPS) - A weeklong conference here of Roman Catholic representatives from 12 French-speaking African countries has agreed that Roman Catholicism is generally tolerated rather than welcomed in them. Usually it has to "watch its own behaviour to avoid being confronted by the earthly powers-that-be."

A report from a special correspondent of Africa Church Information Service said the conference described Roman Catholicism in many of the dozen countries - Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Mali, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta, Central African Republic, Zaire, Rwanda, and Burundi - as "gagged" by the government, with views contrary to government policy subject to censorship.

"The conference agreed that such a situation compromised the church's freedom and action and it was virtually impossible for it to campaign against social inequalities or corruption," ACIS reported.

Zaire, the country among the dozen with the most Roman Catholics, was described as summing up church-state tensions. The conference noted that Zaire President Mobutu Sese Seko replied to criticisms from the country's Roman Catholic bishops by saying he would "no longer tolerate the church in Zaire setting itself up as state censor." The president invoked Jesus' words in the gospels, "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things are God's", in support of his position.

Subsequent to his statements, AZAP, the Zaire news agency, said the church wanted to "run current affairs platforms." It reported that members of the youth section of Zaire's only political party would be stationed in all places of worship to insure that sermons and prayers are not "reactionary."

In another action, the conference here turned down a proposal that a continent-wide transmitter be built to broadcast in French.

EPS

## GDR CHURCH LEADER SUGGESTS INFO IN SCHOOLS ABOUT CHURCH

Güstrow, GDR (EPS) - The head of the Evangelical Church of Anhalt has urged that the GDR state education system provide basic information on the Christian faith. President Eberhard Natho said many people know very little about "what the church is and what moves the church."

Other speakers at the synod meeting of the Federation of Evangelical Churches in the GDR were critical of government restrictions on travel to other Warsaw Pact countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.

Evangelischer Pressedienst, news agency of the Evangelical Church in (the Federal Republic of) Germany reported that for the first time in more than a year, GDR authorities permitted Western correspondents to report from a GDR synod meeting.

The gathering adopted a statement on peace made in August by the central committee of the World Council of Churches. [Story: EPS no.23 , page 2 ] It also affirmed the ecumenical community as a way to further reconciliation across all boundaries.

EPS

ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The directors of the Ecumenical Development Cooperative Society, meeting in Geneva, have approved a US\$ 72,000 loan for a collective coffee and cocoa marketing project in the Ivory Coast, and a US\$ 20,000 loan for a fruit box factory in Peru. The society is a kind of "ecumenical world bank" making loans to assist the world's poor. Board member Robert Thomas, president of the overseas ministries division of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)[USA], said the society's low-interest loans "are one way that Christians can deal with each other across the vast rich-poor divide, making capital available where it was unobtainable before." Its US\$ 5 million in loan capital comes from individual and group investors.

Meaningful work for young people is an international problem churches have ignored says Karl Hertz, director of the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, Switzerland. Hertz, speaking in Indianapolis (Indiana) USA, said the problem exists both in industrial societies of Europe and North America and in Third World countries.

The Danish church relief and development organisation, Danchurchaid, has cabled its support of the South African Council of Churches in the wake of recent verbal clashes between it and South Africa police minister Louis Le Grange. [See EPS no. 25, page 8 ]

An ecumenical delegation from Britain and Ireland has returned from the Middle East and recommended direct negotiations between representatives of Israel and the Palestinians, the latter "determined by the Palestinians themselves." The team noted it met none among many Palestinians it talked with "who doubted that the Palestine Liberation Organisation represents the aspirations of the Palestinian people." The delegation included staff of the British and Irish Councils of Churches, plus Anglican, Quaker, Roman Catholic, and Reformed representatives.

The National Council of Churches [USA] news and information committee has voted opposition to "the licensing of journalists that has been suggested in discussions of a new world information and communication order." The group added its support for other aspects of the discussions, "particularly... the goal of giving full opportunity to people everywhere to tell their own story to their own community and to the world." However, it said, state licensing of journalists "creates the frightening possibility that journalists whose reporting displeases... the state could have their licenses revoked, their voices stilled."

Kathpress, the Austrian Roman Catholic news agency, reports that six Czechoslovak Roman Catholics were given prison sentences of from 10 months to three years for illegal trading in religious literature. Kathpress said all six pleaded not guilty. Two of the six were signers of the Charter 77 memorandum on human rights in Czechoslovakia.

Klaus Gysi, GDR state secretary for religious affairs, told a gathering of Berlin University students that "social peace service" as an alternative to military service is "not acceptable." Gysi said military strength is "the most genuine and biggest contribution" of the GDR to securing peace. Some groups of young Christians and others have urged an alternative service option.



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Representatives of the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical Taizé Community met for three days at the community's headquarters about 75 kilometers north of Lyon. On the agenda were relationships between the two, especially in view of the WCC's 1983 assembly in Vancouver.

The moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has called for a total mobilisation of resources to eliminate hunger in Africa. I.H. Frempong contrasted images of Africans going without food with the vast expanses of fertile land on the continent.

A copyright specialist engaged by the Seventh-day Adventists, says the works of Adventist pioneer Ellen G. White (1827-1915) "did not constitute copyright infringement/piracy." Her 70 books are central to Adventist beliefs about theology, health, and church life. Former Adventist minister Walter Rea says White borrowed much more material for her writings than church leaders have generally acknowledged. His book, "The White Lie," is to be published later this year.

Prime Minister Garret Fitzgerald of the Irish Republic says he would like to make his predominantly Roman Catholic country non-sectarian in terms of government. "We have something here," he said in a radio interview, "that Northern Ireland Protestants find unacceptable," a reference to concerns of the religious majority in the part of the island still part of the United Kingdom. The majority of the population of a united Ireland would be Roman Catholic. "Our laws and our constitution, our practices and our attitudes," he said, "reflect those of the majority ethos and are not acceptable to Protestants."

All-Church Press, a 67-year-old ecumenical publishing venture in the USA, has gone out of business because of financial difficulties. It published a chain of papers with a page or more devoted to news of each local church sponsor and the rest to national and international religion news.

Benjamin Masilo, vice president of the Evangelical Church and president of the Christian Council of Lesotho, has been reported alive and well in South Africa. USA Presbyterian missionary David Miller, on home leave from Lesotho, said Masilo called to say he is all right. He was abducted 4 September. Also this month, another CCL leader, newspaper editor Edgar Motuba, was taken from his home and found dead two days later. And CCL executive committee member Litsietsi Putsoa was reported in police custody. Lesotho Prime Minister Jonathan Lebua has been at odds with church leaders opposed to his rule, which has included suspension of the country's parliament. [Earlier story: EPS no.25, page 8].

A yearlong celebration of the 800th anniversary of the birth of Francis of Assisi begins 4 October, the day on which he is remembered in several church calendars. He was born in 1181.

ECUTEXT: Tourism - What Can the Churches Do?\*

As the people of God committed to love, justice and service in the world, the church is being challenged to fulfill its role in society. In relation to tourism, the church can speak for the positive values of tourism and at the same time speak against its negative aspects.

Such prophetic tasks could lead the church to work for alternatives in tourism that are wholesome, creative and just.....

Some of the factors involved in "just tourism" would be:

- The cessation of "sex tours" that further dehumanize both the tourist and the women and men in the host country.
- An end to the insensitive ways by which tourists succumb to commercial entertainment which exploits sacred sites and religious rituals including those of other faiths.
- Exposing the exploitative and deceptive means used in the promoting and implementing of tourism.
- Insisting that the travel industry pay for social, environmental, and other damages. This means that the tourist should be prepared to pay the total cost of travel, including the hidden social costs.

Local churches could assist this process in the following ways:

- Conduct group studies on the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in their own particular context. From their faith-thinking and motive-searching, a theology of tourism could emerge.
- Sponsor dialogues (or a series of them) between people interested in and involved in tourism industry, government planners, tourist organisers, researchers, ethicists, theologians and students.
- Adopt a Bill of Rights and Code of Ethics that will help all concerned become more sensitive and responsible.
- Be responsible stewards of God's creation: mountain, land, sea, air and most of all human beings.
- Identify with and support oppressed people who are struggling to attain dignity and justice, being especially sensitive to racism, sexism and neo-colonialism.

The church has an international membership and could experiment with a "just tourism". Examples of this would require complete cooperation between peoples of the third world and the first world to:

- Ensure that the concerns of the tourist do not conflict with the hopes and life style of the host country.
- Assist the tourists to interpret their experience so that their travel experiences will be integrated with the rest of their life and faith.
- Provide a ministry to travellers
- Prepare travellers through such material as films, tapes and study sessions so that travellers are aware of matters of justice, and sensitive about their own life style.
- Provide alternative tours and exposure trips arranged by local people.

\* This is an excerpt from a report on a tourism workshop sponsored by the Christian Conference of Asia in Manila 12-25 September 1980. It is among materials assembled for an International Conference on Church and Tourism scheduled for Stockholm 2-6 November under World Council of Churches and Swedish church auspices [See EPS No. 13, page 8].



ECUVIEW: Background Update on Kampuchea\*

It has been a good year for the people of Kampuchea especially when compared with the last few years. People have had food, factories have begun to work, hospitals have had medicines to dispense, schools have had supplies. The change since January 1977 when the present authorities ousted the Khmer Rouge is nothing less than spectacular.

Unfortunately, next year does not look so bright. Some world relief agencies are already talking about a new emergency and an increase in the shortfall of food.

The recent reseating of the Khmer Rouge at the United Nations points up the continuing inability of the Vietnamese-backed Heng Samrin government to garner international political support. This, despite in the last year, a nationwide election and the introduction of a new constitution.

Latest eyewitness reports indicate that, both in the area of security and in agriculture, the situation is far from happy. The present government has always had to face the fact that the former Khmer Rouge rulers still occupy part of the country, particularly near the Thai border. Bands of bandits and/or guerillas have continued to be present in some parts of the countryside. Travel outside the towns and cities has remained hazardous. The recent re-imposition of curfews and the earlier hours (7pm to 5am in provincial cities, 9pm to 5am in Phnom Penh) seem to indicate either no progress or even a worsening of the situation.

In the area of agriculture it is the natural, or rather unnatural, phenomena that are causing relief workers to sound warning noises about a possible new emergency. Drought and floods have affected large areas of the country. The southern provinces have been hit by drought and the eastern and Mekong river areas have been flooded.

The drought up to mid-June prevented ploughing being carried out and destroyed the seed rice nurseries, despite three plantings. To compensate, seed held in store has now been distributed.

The drought is still continuing and all provinces are pessimistic about the harvest... Early melting of the Himalayan snows brought flooding to the Mekong. This badly affected both the maize and vegetable crops.....

All the uncertainty comes at a time when the main agencies running the Kampuchean relief programme are themselves uncertain. Shortage of funds, no firm programme plans for 1982, the belief, up to a few weeks ago, that the emergency was coming to an end - all combine to increase uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the general relief programme to Kampuchea. Meanwhile, workers and the programmes remain in suspense.....

\* \* \*

\* This backgrounder was prepared following discussions with representatives of more than a dozen United Nations and non-governmental agencies working in Kampuchea. A mid-October meeting is to decide on a 1982 assistance plan under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and the Christian Conference of Asia. The 1981 WCC/CCA effort included supplies of 1,000 tonnes of rice seed, 500 tonnes of superphosphate, 1,000 litres of fungicide, and US\$5,000 worth of vegetable seed.

## ECUVIEW: "The Situation in Central America"

There is a strong, overall impression that the most significant change that has occurred within the past year in an area which was already one of the most explosive in the world is the Reagan administration's determination to reassert exclusive American authority and control over the region's development. The strategies designed to achieve this goal include:

- a) propping up with economic and military aid repressive dictatorships friendly to the USA, primarily El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, but also Guyana, Haiti and the Dominican Republic;
- b) destabilizing by economic pressures, political isolation, press manipulation and military threats socialist and social-democratic regimes such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada and Jamaica, where it has already achieved desired results; and
- c) fostering right-wing tendencies in relatively stable democracies, notably Costa Rica, but also Panama, Trinidad, Bahamas and Puerto Rico.

With the Reagan administration, industrialist interests of the USA are attempting to rebuild the American economy by reversing the flow of capital, at the same time assuring the continued accessibility by the USA of raw materials and energy resources.

The primary geopolitical factor in Central America therefore is oil. The present USA administration considers continued control and access to these resources as absolutely indispensable for the survival of its economic and industrial system. This all the more so as the Middle East region becomes increasingly vulnerable as far as American interests are concerned. As a consequence, the area is one of the most militarized in the world.

The increasing involvement and influence of European countries in the region has been viewed as an important new and positive factor. Aside from financial aid given by European governments, the political activities of the Socialist International play an increasingly important role.

The failure of the American "White Paper on El Salvador" to impress Europeans into considering the Central American conflict as basically an East-West problematic is indicative of what could escalate into major West-West tensions regarding this region.

There seems to be a consensus that the economic aid offered and the political steps undertaken by Europeans, together perhaps with Mexicans and Canadians, provide a necessary sobering element to the USA and may give the region the needed respite to pursue the solution of its own local and international problems.

In spite of repeated and virulent accusations on the part of the Reagan administration, the role of the Soviet Union in the area has been surprisingly low-key, apart from its intensive relationship with Cuba. In the long term, the success of more pluralistic models of socialism, such as is being developed in Nicaragua, may even serve to limit more effectively the influence of the Soviet Union in the area.

- Eric Weingärtner & Charles Harper\*

\* Weingärtner is a programme secretary in the WCC Commission of the Churches on International Affairs. Harper is WCC secretary for Latin American human rights resources. Both visited Central America for three weeks last May and June. This is an edited excerpt of their longer report, available on request. Another excerpt appeared in EPS no.26, page 7.



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16 October 1981

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 23 OCTOBER 1981

BISHOP AMONG THOSE  
KILLED WITH SADAT

Cairo (EPS) - Those who assassinated Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat also killed one of the Coptic Church's leading figures - Bishop Samuel, whose church portfolio included public and ecumenical affairs and social services.

His funeral, in Cairo's large Coptic cathedral, was attended by an estimated eight to ten thousand people, including representatives of other Christian churches in Egypt, other Oriental Orthodox churches, the Middle East and World Councils of Churches, and the Vatican. Also present were several high-ranking government officials and Egypt's Islamic religious leader. The Coptic Church is the largest Christian community in mostly Muslim Egypt.

The dead bishop was long active in international ecumenical affairs, including the All Africa Conference of Churches, the Middle East Council of Churches (of which he was one of three co-presidents), and the World Council of Churches of whose central committee he was a member since 1961). He was one of five bishops Sadat appointed in early September to administer the church in terms of its state relationships.

Setting up the bishops' committee was among several actions Sadat took last month to combat what he described as religious extremism and threats to national unity. He also withdrew the 1971 government decree endorsing the election of Pope Shenouda III as Coptic Church head. The pope has since been at a desert monastery, where he wrote a pastoral letter urging church members to "remain calm" and describing the bishops committee the "subject of my love". [Story: EPS no, 25, page 3.]

The brunt of Sadat's actions, however, fell on Islamic fundamentalists, four of whom have been charged with the assassination .

The church's Holy Synod met in extraordinary session after the assassination according to a report in the French-language Journal d'Egypte. A communique from the meeting accented the need for national unity and underlined the church's role in the current "delicate stage of Egyptian history." The bishops also spoke of the "necessity to remain faithful to the noble principles which inspired the action of President Sadat and for which he died." The bishops endorsed then vice president Hosni Mubarak as Sadat's successor. He was subsequently overwhelmingly approved in a national referendum.

The Coptic hierarchy includes more than 50 bishops. Absent from the synod meeting, besides the pope, were eight bishops who are in jail. In a meeting before the assassination, the same synod said it understands "the conditions that dictated the resolutions made by the president to overcome sectarian troubles and preserve national unity." It also declared that "the ecclesial position of Pope Shenouda III has not been touched. The canons of our church are preserved and followed."

The bishops added that "the Holy Synod is the sole body that has the right to speak on behalf of the church and to decide what is best for her." They warned against "negative trends and strange ideas opposed to the well-being of the church and the nation that may creep into the thinking of those living abroad and separated them from the true spirit of the Coptic church..."

[NOTE: The text of the WCC condolence message appears as an ECUTEXT, page 11].



N. EUROPE CHURCH REPS  
MEET ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Croydon (EPS) - The first of three subregional consultations of the Churches' Human Rights Program has issued an appeal to strengthen "the implementation of such basic human rights as the right to work, freedom of information and the right of religious freedom."

The program was formed by the Conference of European Churches, the Canadian Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches [USA] as a church response to the 1975 Helsinki Accords signed by the USA, Canada, and most countries of Europe.

The north Europe conference, here [3-8 October], included about 35 church representatives from Ireland and Iceland in the west to Poland and the Soviet Union in the east. A similar North America gathering is scheduled for February, followed by one for south and central Europe in Trieste in June. Next October, a gathering of church representatives from all countries which signed the accords is scheduled for Bucharest.

"Commitment to the implementation of human rights includes a commitment to peace and detente," a conference report said, "just as the struggle for peace includes a struggle for the full dignity of the human being."

A conference statement covered several specific subjects, among them:

- Work: "Many people now suffer from the tension between socially necessary work and personal fulfillment through creative activity. How can we help people to develop a new work ethic, new forms of community-creating work and meaningful models for a redistribution of income?"
- Information: "Freedom of information is a basic requirement for maturity and the forming of human conscience. We have assumed that information has a different value in different social systems and plays a different role in them. How can we put people in a position to be able to evaluate information, to understand it and thereby to develop critical faculties for making decisions?"
- Religious freedom: It "includes the right to draw conclusions for exercising responsibility in society, such as is the case for specific forms of education for peace by the churches."

The group also urged freedom from "European myopia" and expressed concern about lack of progress at the second Helsinki follow-up conference which began in Madrid last November. "If Madrid fails to produce a significant step forward on the path leading on from Helsinki," the consultation said, "this may well spell catastrophe for détente... and leave the way open for a further escalation of the arms race."

Its statement asked churches to press for a European disarmament conference, including consideration of proposals for nuclear free zones.

EFFORTS TO DESTROY  
CHURCH COUNCIL SEEN

Johannesburg (EPS) - A former employee of the accounting service for the South African Council of Churches has been acquitted of all charges of involvement in fraud and theft totaling nearly 40,000 rand.

But the council's general secretary, Desmond Tutu, says the acquittal is related to efforts to destroy it because of its work "especially... providing for the dependants of political prisoners and in providing legal defence for people facing political charges."

The magistrate in the case faulted the council for allegedly confused book-keeping, and accepted arguments that the defendant was being used as a scapegoat.

Referring to a similar case with a similar result last year, Tutu said "it is interesting that on two occasions when the SACC has brought complaints of financial dishonesty and the matters have come to court, it was the complainant who ended up being in the dock."

He added that "despite what the magistrate has said... we are not afraid of anyone examining our books." He said the council arranged an outside review of its affairs which "over the relevant period.... gave the SACC a clean bill of health."

I will not be deterred by all the vilifications and denigrations and personal attacks by people ranging from prime ministers to magistrates," Tutu concluded- "We will stand by what we believe God wants us to do."

In another South African development, 300 blacks sent by the South African government to the Transkei reportedly managed to return to Capetown. On Sunday, 11 October, a group of them gathered outside the Dutch Reformed church where the South African prime minister usually worships. The building was guarded and the blacks did not attempt to enter.

In a message to members of the white parish, the group invoked their shared Christian faith and implored the congregation to influence those in it responsible for the white-minority-government's race policies. "We have suffered greatly through actions undertaken by members of your church, who profess the same faith we do, and whom you support," it said.

Transkei is one of the areas recognised by South Africa as black homelands.

[The message of the group appears as an ECUTEXT in this EPS, page 11.]

In another South African church protest, the synod of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa expressed "indignation, anger, and deep concern" at the arrest of the son of its moderator. "We... wish to protest in the strongest possible terms against the detention without trial of Charles Bill. We once more ask that he be either convicted in court or released immediately," the synod said. "We affirm that neither our leaders nor our church as a whole will be intimidated by such security measures."



GOVERNMENT FREES  
ETHIOPIAN BISHOP

Addis Ababa (EPS) - The Ethiopian government has released Bishop Paulos of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. He was imprisoned for five years.

The hierarch is a member of the World Council of Churches central committee. In a message to the church patriarchate, WCC General Secretary Philip Potter expressed joy at the release and offered prayer "that he and the church will continue to witness to the freedom of the gospel and to the service which we are called to give for the well being of the whole community."

The news came about the same time as a report from the [Federal] German Evangelical Alliance about the Ethiopian visit of the head of an alliance organization which finances Bible schools and evangelism programs in Ethiopia. The report quoted him that "in most cases it is local or regional authorities who do not follow the state's concept of religious freedom that are responsible for the discrimination and the persecution of Christians."

EPS

USA CHURCH, BUSINESS REPS  
DIALOGUE ON SOUTH AFRICA

New York (EPS) - About 125 business and church participants and observers met for a day here to discuss corporate policies regarding South Africa. That country's white-minority-government's system of race separation brought repeated condemnations from both business and church people. But what to do about it revealed a spectrum of views among the representatives of 29 of the 500 largest USA corporations and 30 religious agencies .

There was no effort to draft an agreement or consensus statement, although the view of William Broderick of the international governmental affairs office of Ford Motor Co. seemed to have general concurrence: "Business as usual is not acceptable," he said, "but moral outrage is not enough."

The day featured three panels - on corporate performance in the workplace, USA investors and the South African government, and the way for corporations to "contribute to meaningful social change" in the country. (Not all present agreed, however, on what would constitute such change.)

Some participants said the most important part of the day was that it happened at all. "Believe me," quipped one corporation executive, "they weren't standing in line to come here."

Agencies of several denominations (Lutheran, Anglican, United, Reformed, Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic), Ford and General Motors, and the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility arranged the day. Other corporations represented included Control Data, Colgate Palmolive, and Citibank.

Business representatives generally pointed to what they described as progress for blacks as a result of corporate policies and actions in South Africa. However, some, though not all, church representatives said corporate withdrawal is preferable because efforts to aid the black majority are "coopted for evil by the South African government." Others questioned whether the corporate examples represent real social change or are just "polishing the chains" on non-whites.

EPS

LUTHERAN-METHODIST GROUP  
NOTES SEVERAL AGREEMENTS

Oslo (EPS) - Participants in the official international Lutheran-Methodist theological dialogue have noted basic agreement in their understandings of salvation, the Holy Spirit, and ministry.

The third of a projected five meetings of the group was held here [3-9 October]. Theme of the session was the church as a community of grace. The 1982 and 1983 meetings are to be on word and sacraments and the church's mission.

Though differences exist on the question of sanctification - how a Christian's life is changed as a result of God's action to justify the sinner - USA Methodist Bishop William Cannon, co-chairperson of the group, noted that both traditions stress the dependence of the Christian on God's grace.

USA Lutheran Professor David Tiede, the other co-chairperson, noted the importance of understanding the historical setting and circumstances of the origins of both movements, Lutheranism in Germany in the 16th century, Methodism in England in the 18th.

Co-sponsors of the dialogue are the World Methodist Council and the Lutheran World Federation.

EPS

WALDENSIAN-METHODIST GROUP  
NOTES CHRISTIAN DIFFERENCES

Rome (EPS) - An Italian Waldensian-Methodist ecumenical commission report says differences between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism should not be minimized.

Notwithstanding ecumenical progress in recent years, the report says, "Catholicism and Protestantism are two profoundly different ways of understanding and living Christianity."

The report speaks of the "will for hegemony on the part of Catholicism in its encounters with the rest of " Christianity. It calls the papacy "the incarnations of the will for hegemony" and thus "the greatest obstacle to Christian unity."

It is critical of bilateral theological dialogues between Roman Catholicism and other Christian traditions because they make "havoc of the front of non-Roman churches." It also criticizes media attention to the pope which, it says, make him appear omnipresent and the one who "holds the reins of the ecumenical movement." The report is to be studied in congregations prior to the 1982 Waldensian-Methodist synod meeting.

EPS



IMPROVEMENTS IN WORLD  
REFUGEE SITUATION SEEN

Geneva (EPS) - Poul Hartling, United Nations high commissioner for refugees, reports signs of a reduction in refugee aid requirements.

In a report to the commission executive committee he said he is "relieved to see that... sharp annual increases are not recurring," as happened between 1977 and 1980 when spending on world refugee needs increased fivefold to more than US\$ 500 million. He noted that "even some decrease is expected" this year and next.

The 1.7 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan remain the biggest single group, he reported, "all eagerly expressing their wish to return to their homeland when circumstances permit."

The commissioner said voluntary repatriation of refugees to their country of origin is the best course to follow. He cited a recently completed repatriation program involving more than 650,000 people from Zimbabwe, and the start of a similar project for Chad nationals uprooted by civil war there.

In Nairobi, a regional UNHCR official, Albert-Alain Peters, noted a gradual easing of the refugee problem in the four-nation horn of Africa (Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, and Ethiopia). Peters, commission refugee-center coordinator for the four countries, said refugee malnutrition is slowly being controlled.

Nonetheless, he said, the region's refugee problems are second only to Pakistan's, with estimates of the number in the horn ranging from 900,000 to 1.3 million, most in Sudan and Somalia.

In Oslo, Hartling's office was awarded the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize 14 October. At work since 1951, the office also received the prize in 1954.

EPS

JAPANESE CHURCHES IN EFFORT  
ON BEHALF OF 'UNTOUCHABLES'

Tokyo (EPS) - Japanese churches are mounting a petition drive to extend legislation meant to prevent discrimination against the Burakumin, a group in Japanese society whose social status has parallels with that of India's untouchables.

The current 10-year-old law expires next March, but three Japanese church leaders say many of its objectives remain unfulfilled.

In a letter appealing for support of the drive, General Secretary Tsutomu Shoji and Chairperson Yoichi Kishimoto of the National Christian Council of Japan and General Secretary John Nakajima of the United Church of Christ in Japan, say the Burakumin are "denied the basic rights of freedom of marriage and occupation which are guaranteed in our constitution."

They add that the Japanese government "follows a policy of making this social problem appear as insignificant as possible, in spite of the continued existence of 3 million persons living in 6,000 segregated communities."

EPS

FINNISH CHURCH SUGGESTS  
IMMIGRATION PRINCIPLES

Helsinki (EPS) - The foreign affairs committee of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has suggested principles to guide the nation's immigration policy.

Reacting to a report published by a state committee on migration, the church committee said Finland should not be "evading its responsibility to participate, also by means of labour policy, in creating employment opportunities for less fortunate workers, especially those from the Third World."

The church committee also urged that "social, educational and general cultural services for foreign workers and their families should be provided in a manner commensurate with the standard expected to be provided for Finnish immigrants in other countries."

It said that the country's immigration policy should be such that no one is prevented by legislative or other, indirect means from leaving the country or returning to it.

The number of non-Nordic born persons in Finland is estimated at about 12,000, out of a population of approximately 5 million.

EPS

AFRICAN EVANGELICALS  
MEET ON LOCAL CHURCH

Lilongwe, Malawi (EPS) - The general secretary of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa and Madagascar told the group's fourth assembly, here, that some Christians pay insufficient attention to the church.

Tokunboh Adeyemo, who also chairs the World Evangelical Fellowship, addressed the approximately 350 participants from more than 125 church groups and Christian organizations from about 30 countries. In the past 20 years, he said, "our emphasis has been on the parachurch organization. Good as this may be, it is neither biblical nor safe. Central to the heart of God and the Scriptures is the church. I suspect that something is radically wrong with our ecclesiology."

Both he and association president Samuel Odunaike, who chairs the Nigerian Evangelical Fellowship, urged attention to and support for the local church. "If Europe gave the world modern missions and United States gave the 20th century the impetus for world evangelization, let Africa rise today and offer the world a model for the local church," Odunaike said.

EPS



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH  
ACTS ON ABORIGINES

Sydney (EPS) - In the wake of an international church report critical of the condition of Australia's Aborigine population, two Uniting Church in Australia synods have acted on property they own with Aborigines in mind.

The New South Wales synod, meeting here, gave property worth about A\$ 250,000 as an "unqualified gift to the Aboriginal people." And the Northern Territory synod rejected an A\$ 10 million proposal to develop some land it owns as a hotel complex. Instead, commercial development of the Alice Springs tract is to incorporate "the needs of Aboriginal people."

The report by the World Council of Churches visitation team earlier this year also led to comments and resolutions on the Aborigine situation in other regional meetings of the Uniting and Anglican churches in recent weeks.

A new Gallup poll says 53 percent of Australians agree with the view of the report that "racism is entrenched in every aspect of Australian society." Forty percent disagree; seven percent are unsure. Half those polled say not enough is being done by federal and state governments to help Aborigines. A quarter say the right amount is being done; 18 percent say too much is.

Jean Skuse, Australian Council of Churches general secretary, called the poll a "remarkable public vindication of the integrity and accuracy of the WCC team's observations and findings. I think it answers the accusations and inaccuracies and wild, unfounded judgements that have been levelled at the report by people in the community who refuse to see the massive injustice being suffered by Aboriginal people," she added.

[Story on the report: EPS no. 21, page 2.]

EPS

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

A new Swedish translation of the New Testament, sponsored and authorized by the government, is expected to be available in November. A special thanksgiving day for the version was 11 October. Portions of the new translation have been read on Swedish television and printed in newspapers since mid-September.

The Re-Formed Association of Churches of Christ (Disciples) and the United Reformed Church in England and Wales have merged to form the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom. The URC is a result of an earlier merger of Presbyterians and Congregationalists.

Robert Nelson, retiring Africa executive for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) [USA], predicts that growing African church independence will eventually help "Madison Avenue -style evangelism to burn out" on the continent. He says North Americans who see Africa as a "promotional playground" and who "have no interest in seeing the African church develop as a whole" are a continuing problem there. And, he adds, "because the African people need financial assistance they are prey to these promoters. Sometimes they unwittingly sell their souls for a mess of pottage."

The new text of Roman Catholic canon law, was expected to be approved this month by the pontifical commission overseeing the revision, in process 18 years. It would still be subject to Pope John Paul II's approval before publication. The law has been unchanged since it was codified in 1917.

An 18-member delegation from the National Council of Churches [USA] is to visit China 12-30 November. Besides council staff, the group includes several USA denominational leaders. Four Chinese church leaders were NCC guests in 1979. "If we return from China with an increased sensitivity to the need for mutuality in our relationships with other Christians around the world, including those in China, we will have gained a great deal", says Franklin Woo, director of the NCC China program.

The third round of official theological dialogue between theologians from Reformed and Lutheran denominations in the USA has begun. Six meetings in two years are projected, the purpose being to "rediscover the common roots" of the two traditions, examine "areas of mutual concern," and "discover further theological steps we might take together." European Lutheran and Reformed churches are generally officially in full fellowship with each other. Recommendations for official fellowship from earlier rounds of the USA dialogue have not been implemented.

Reformed and Lutheran churches in Austria and Hungary have scheduled special events to mark the 200th anniversary of the 1781 Edict of Toleration. That officially gave Lutheran, Reformed, and Eastern Orthodox Christians ruled by Habsburg Emperor Joseph II a measure of religious freedom. It thus tolerated a reemergence of non-Roman Catholic church organizations after generations of official opposition.



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The Australian Anglican General Synod has backed away from a proposal to build a multi-million-dollar "great church" to mark the country's bicentennial in 1988. The synod left the way open for a possible decision in favor later in the decade. Opponents called such a one-denominational national cathedral an irrelevant and extravagant misuse of resources. "Like bishops' palaces, cathedrals and 'great churches' are images of power we can do without," said one. Supporters saw it as an important symbol to "capture the spirit of the nation" and be a "platform from which the gospel would be preached".

USA Roman Catholic theologian Rosemary Radford Reuther told a United Methodist commission meeting in Madison (Wisconsin) that seminary women's studies programs are "marginal and vulnerable," threatened by cadres of hostile white male students. She said she hoped for a time when a feminist critique would "transform the way all topics are taught" in seminaries.

A delegation of Reformed and Lutheran pastors of Hungarian congregations in west Europe and North America spent a week visiting Hungary at the invitation of the World Federation of Hungarians and the country's council of churches.

A group of GDR sociologists has prepared 15 "theses on Martin Luther". Published by an organ of the country's ruling communist party, they stress Luther's revolutionary impact on society, notwithstanding "the contradiction between his role as initiator of a broad revolutionary movement, which included all oppositional classes, and his own limited objective, which was a moderate middle-class position orientated toward the regional sovereign." Church and state in the GDR are separately planning major attention to Luther and his legacy during 1983, the 500th anniversary of his birth.

There was a delay in the installation of Bishop Lutfi al-Lahham as head of the Melkite Catholic Church in Jerusalem following reported objections from the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Syria, and other Arab sources. He was to succeed Archbishop Hilarion Capucci, expelled from Israel in 1977 after serving three years in jail on charges of smuggling guns to Arabs opposed to Israel.

The executive committee of the International Christian Federation for the Prevention of Alcoholism and Drug Addiction says "the world church has a significant responsibility for the solution of alcohol and drug problems" in which "all nations and some major multi-national industries are seen to be involved." Meeting in Zakroczym, Poland, the committee of the London-based group urged that the subject be part of "appropriate sections" of the 1983 World Council of Churches assembly.

The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has launched a home mission campaign aimed especially at holders of honorary parish offices and young people.

The Australian Council of Churches executive committee has urged the Australian government not to support USA military aid to El Salvador, and to use "diplomatic efforts to secure a negotiated settlement." The committee also urged increased aid for El Salvador from Australian church relief agencies.

ECUTEXT: Message of Nyanga Bush people to members of the congregation of South African Prime Minister P. Botha [Related story, page 3 ]

We the people of Nyanga Bush profess our Christianity and belief in God. We see the members of the [white Dutch Reformed Church] as part of this Christian family sharing in the common fatherhood of God. This makes us all brothers and sisters in this family. During these times we have suffered greatly through actions undertaken by members of your church, who profess the same faith we do and whom you support. We have been forcefully separated as families, we women forced to live apart from our husbands. We were even separated from our children during a number of deportations. We have been forced to live in places where we find no work nor food and have witnessed the death of our children through starvation. We find our return to such places impossible. It is now in our utter desperation and suffering that we implore you in the name of God to:

- 1) stop the continued separation of our families.
- 2) stop the humiliation we suffer as a consequence of the constant hounding like criminals.
- 3) prevent our removal to areas of starvation.
- 4) enable us to live our united family life in a Christian way in areas of our choice.

We pray that you will hear our plea and put an end to the suffering through the guidance of those responsible and sharing in your membership. We pray that soon we may be able to live as one loving Christian family free from oppression and fear, and for your courage and strength to make that a reality.

EPS

ECUTEXT: Message of Condolence from Philip Potter, WCC general secretary, to Bishop Youannis, secretary of the Holy Synod of the Coptic Church [Related story, page 1 ]

On the occasion of the funeral rites for our beloved brother Bishop Samuel, we wish to convey through you to the whole Church our profound sense of grief. We and the churches throughout the world join you in mourning this loss and in giving thanks to God for the witness of his servant to the whole Oikoumene.

We express as well our sincere condolences to the people of Egypt and especially to the families and loved ones of your dedicated President Anwar al-Sadat and those other eminent figures in the life of your nation, who fell victims to the assassins' bullets.

'Professing together our common faith in the Lord of life and love, we are shocked and deeply saddened at this act of senseless violence. We join with you in prayer that such atrocities will not be repeated, and that the harmonious relations between communities and nations to which our beloved Bishop Samuel was so committed will become realities.

The peace of our Lord and the grace of the Holy Spirit be with us all, forever and ever.

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# EPS

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NEWS AGENCY APOLOGIZES FOR  
EL SALVADOR CHURCH REPORTS

New York (EPS) - Editor-in-chief H.L. Stevenson of United Press International has apologized for stories linking three church agencies with military activity against the El Salvador government.

The UPI stories were based on USA state department documents said to have been taken from El Salvador guerillas. The documents' authenticity has been questioned.

The World Council of Churches, Catholic Relief Services, and OXFAM were cited in stories by Juan Walte as being involved in a guerilla plan to "set up a religious and humanitarian front ... to funnel aid and relief donations to the guerillas. The funds were to be used for many purposes, including buying weapons".

Following agency complaints about the sources and the adverse effects on their work in El Salvador of the UPI reports, Stevenson said he investigated and reprimanded two UPI writers for not seeking a response to the charges from the church groups. He also wrote letters of "regret" for the "lapse in our editorial process".

UPI then distributed an investigative series on the agencies' El Salvador field work. Stevenson said UPI reporters found "that there had been a number of attempts to discredit the agencies" but that in the field "we could find no evidence that the claims against the groups were true".

A Catholic Relief Services official said the news agency "handled the situation honourably". Paul McCleary, executive of Church World Service and an officer of the WCC interchurch aid commission, said unfortunately damage has been done, notwithstanding the apologies.

EPS

REFUGEE PLAN DRAWS  
CHURCH CRITICISM

New York (EPS) - The decision of USA President Ronald Reagan to turn back Haitians fleeing their country by sea and attempting to enter the USA as refugees has drawn church criticism.

The Haitian influx has been running at about 1,000 a month. Haitian President Jean-Claude Duvalier says those returned won't face reprisals. Target of the new program is said to be refugee "traffickers" who charge US\$ 1,000 or more to take Haitians to Florida, often in unsafe boats.

Roman Catholic Archbishop Edward McCarthy of Miami called for a "more humane way of treating our brothers and sisters... than rejecting them on the high seas".

The National Council of Churches said the program is a "violation of Judeo-Christian, democratic, humanitarian, and legal principles for which this nation stands".

EPS



GATHERING QUESTIONS  
YEAR-2000 CELEBRATION

New York (EPS) - Should Christians make a special point out of celebrating the year 2000? Participants at an ecumenical symposium here on the subject tended to say any such celebration of the beginning of the third millennium on the Christian calendar should be low-key.

Keynoter for the gathering was Cynthia Wedel, one of the six presidents of the World Council of Churches. She suggested that churches inject an element of hope and promise into an often threatening and gloomy future. She urged a hopeful celebration of the year 2000 in a spirit of Christian unity.

But Thomas Stransky, past president of the Roman Catholic Paulist Fathers, cautioned that such a celebration could be "merely an affirmation of today's status quo".

And John Brandon, associate general secretary of the 10-denomination Consultation on Church Union, said continuing societal problems such as inflation and the "rise of a new racism" could make any such celebration a scandal before God and to the world.

Eastern Orthodox theologian John Meyendorff urged churches not to succumb to temptation to be part of some sort of media spectacular to mark the date.

EPS

OLD CATHOLIC, ORTHODOX  
GROUP SEES AGREEMENTS

Zagorsk, USSR (EPS) - The Eastern Orthodox-Old Catholic international theological dialogue commission has adopted four joint statements outlining common teaching of the two Christian traditions on the authority of the church and in the church, infallibility, church councils, and apostolic succession.

Subjects for future commission discussions are to be the doctrine of salvation and the sacraments, and the theology of the end time.

Co-chairing the dialogue are Metropolitan Damaskinos, director of the centre of Ecumenical Patriarchate, near Geneva, and Bishop Leon Gauthier, head of the Christian Catholic Church of Switzerland.

EPS

RWANDA CHURCHES, STATE  
IN BROADCASTING DISPUTE

Kigali, Rwanda (EPS) - New regulations for religious broadcasting are creating a "sharpening dispute" between churches and the government in this central African country, according to a report from Africa Church Information Service.

ACIS writer Philibert Ransoni says elements of the dispute are government decisions to require payment for Sunday religious programming, and to alternate Sunday broadcasts between Roman Catholic and Protestant services.

About two-thirds of the 4.5 million Rwandese are Christians; about three quarters of the Christians Roman Catholics. Their bishops rejected the plan for alternation as one which would "bring confusion into the minds of our followers".

Though the government decision was in response to Protestant requests for airtime, the general secretary of the Rwandese Protestant council said a government letter announcing the measures is inconsistent. A proposed Protestant compromise whereby Roman Catholics and Protestants would share two hours for programming on Sundays has not brought a government response, ACIS reports.

The government letter also reportedly warns churches that mixing politics with religious programming could mean suspension of airtime. The Roman Catholic bishops rejected any proposal for the government to approve homilies as denying "the political maturity of our preachers and ... infringing their rights of free expression".

Ransoni says it is reported that "anti-clericals and embittered former seminarians highly placed in the broadcasting bureaucracy are ... behind the current troubles over religious programming. In fact," he adds, "the programming decision was apparently a compromise between anti-church elements, who rejected the provision of free Sunday services, and pro-church elements who championed the inclusion of Protestant broadcasts".

The ACIS writer concludes that "the programming conflict has helped to bring the country's churches closer together as they attempt to defend their common interests and beliefs".

EPS



HUNGARIAN MARXISTS,  
CHRISTIANS IN TALKS

Debrecen, Hungary (EPS) - The first official dialogue between Marxist philosophers and Christian theologians in Hungary took place at the state research institute here [26 September].

The dialogue explored several aspects of contemporary Christianity, such as the relationship between faith and science, its conception of the human being and the human personality, and its socio-political teaching.

Other issues that emerged included absolute and relative separations between Marxist philosophy and Christian theology, the possibilities and limits to dialogue between the two, new opportunities for cooperation and joint reflection, and ecumenical and international prospects for Christian-Marxist encounter.

State Secretary Imre Miklos, head of the Hungarian government office for religious affairs, opened the consultation. Assessing its results, Miklos noted in particular the clarification of the terminology and views of each group's participants, the assessment of social conditions which are sources of the regeneration of religion, and efforts to define more precisely questions of disagreement as well as issues where increased cooperation is possible.

Miklos also said the dialogue here was a help for Marxists to go beyond negative features of religion to realize its positive historical significance. He said the conversations were fruitful despite remaining unresolved ideological differences, and noted that the theologians in the dialogue did not confine the substance of Marxism to atheism.

Bishop Tibor Bartha, ministerial president of the synod of the Reformed Church in Hungary, extended an invitation from the church to host the next dialogue round.

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-- Attila Komlos\* --

\*Komlos, an EPS correspondent, is assistant editor of the weekly of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Excerpts from his interview with Miklos appear as an ECUVIEW in this EPS, page 10.

EPS

IRISH RC BISHOPS DELAY  
MIXED-MARRIAGES DOCUMENT

Maynooth, Ireland (EPS) - The Irish Roman Catholic bishops, meeting here [12-14 October] have delayed publication of their long-awaited new pastoral directory on mixed marriages.

An official statement on the delay cited the bishops' wish to take account of the new code of Roman Catholic canon law [EPS no. 28, page 9], and of the pope's forthcoming document on marriage and family questions before publishing their directory.

Roman Catholic insistence that all children of mixed marriages be raised as Roman Catholics is considered to have played a part in the decline of Protestant numbers in Ireland. The issue is highly contentious here.

In January 1980 there was a public protest from the five Protestant members of the joint standing committee on mixed marriages over the Roman Catholic policy and in particular the insistence of now retired Bishop Cornelius Lucey of Cork on promises in writing from the non-Roman Catholic partner about the upbringing of the children. Normal practice is for the Roman Catholic partner to pledge to do all in his or her power to ensure the Roman Catholic upbringing of the children, and for the non-Roman Catholic partner to be aware of this without having to promise anything.

Even the prospect of the new regulations has been greeted with some apprehension among Protestants for fear it might mean less openness than currently in some dioceses.

The bishops also issued a statement on current issues. In it they call a recent London bombing by the Provisional Irish Republican Army a "grossly immoral act", for which "those who carried it out, those who ordered it and planned it, those without whose voluntary help it could not have been accomplished, are all marked with the shameful guilt of murder. Those who may now be voluntarily helping its perpetrators to escape are sharing in their sin", they add.

"The organizations which command acts such as this commit their members to evil", the bishops continue. "We beg all young people to avoid all such evil organizations and those who recruit for them. Parents must do their best to protect their children from the propaganda and the influence of these organizations".

Noting the end of the hunger strike by Irish Republican prisoners in Northern Ireland, the bishops say it "brings with it a better opportunity than has existed for years for a new political beginning".

-- Robert Nowell\* --

\*Nowell is an EPS correspondent.

EPS



ROMANIAN PATRIARCH JUSTIN  
VISITS ECUMENICAL CENTER

Geneva (EPS) - Patriarch Justin, head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, visited the World Council of Churches, Lutheran World Federation, World Alliance of Reformed Churches, and Conference of European Churches - all based at the Ecumenical Center - during a stay in Switzerland [21-25 October].

As Metropolitan Justin of Moldavia, he was active in the entry of the Romanian church into the WCC in 1961. He was elected head of the 17-million-member church in 1977 following the death of Patriarch Justinian.

During his visit to the center, Patriarch Justin outlined the situation of his church, which includes nearly 2,500 monks and nuns in about 100 monasteries, and more than 2,000 students in two theological faculties and six seminaries.

Strongly affirming the ecumenical involvement of Orthodoxy, the patriarch said he especially appreciates the process by which churches grow together into visible unity in the WCC - not through centralization, but rather through careful research and study.

Also part of the patriarch's party were Metropolitan Theoctist and Bishop Antonie, the latter a member of the WCC central committee.

EPS

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Meeting in Fulda, the West German Roman Catholic bishops have issued a statement condemning active euthanasia, but affirming that the sick who wish "should be protected against artificial and inhuman prolongation of life when there is no hope of a cure". In another statement, on women in church and society, they urge flexibility in work arrangements to accommodate various situations of men and women. The bishops say there is no possibility for women to be Roman Catholic priests, but that following debate and substantial agreement in the Roman Catholic church, women might one day be ordained deacons.

An Anglican parish in the north of England has withdrawn from a Church of England programme to provide hospitality for visiting Americans. Its vicar said he is "furious and upset" following a letter from the programme administrator. She said the parish is "too working class" to provide the sort of hospitality "well established, middle-class Americans" expect... Meanwhile, in Bar Harbor (Maine) USA, the Congregational church says it will no longer lodge visitors for free in its basement. The minister said "we tried to help out" one summer day when no rooms were available within miles of the resort. But "things were getting out of hand," he said, when word got round and calls for reservations started coming from as far away as Germany, Switzerland, and Israel.

Christian and Muslim leaders in Uganda have told President Milton Obote that security in the country is worse than under former dictator Idi Amin. They say the government shows "indifference" to murder and other offenses against civilians by soldiers.

The triennial meeting of the bishops [Eastern Orthodox] Church of Greece was scheduled for October [1-9] in Athens. Among the agenda items were intra-church communication, clergy and civil courts, the church in light of contemporary changes in society, and the status of official theological dialogue with Roman Catholics.

The former chairperson of the British section of Amnesty International warned a "Christians against torture" conference in Cardiff against a "them and us" mentality. Paul Oestreicher said history shows that "Christians are as capable as anyone else of rationalising and justifying the use of torture".

The [Anglican] Church of Ireland's Representative Body has enacted several measures to attempt to solve the "growing problem" of clergy shortages.

The general board of the [USA] Church of the Brethren has urged the USA Congress to "acknowledge as a nation that the actions taken against American citizens and legal residents of Japanese ancestry during 1942-46 were wrong and contrary" to the USA constitution, and to "make just redress". During World War II, the USA interned approximately 120,000 Japanese-Americans in prison camps.



ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The primate of the [Lutheran] Church of Norway says Roman Catholics should be part of the country's council of churches. Oslo Bishop Andreas Aarflot also said negative attitudes towards Roman Catholicism should be reconsidered in light of convergences suggested by recent theological dialogues. However, Aarflot's views ran into opposition from representatives of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission, the Norwegian Lutheran Inner Mission Society, and Norwegian Pentecostals, who questioned whether the theological dialogues reflect the reality of current church attitudes and doctrines.

A recent survey of Norwegians found that a quarter of them consider themselves practicing Christians, more than nine in 10 did not attend church the previous Sunday, three in five had not been to a Sunday service in the last year, and about one in 12 attended church on 10 or more Sundays in the last year.

Western Church reformer Ulrich Zwingli died in the battle of Kappel on 11 October 1531. Several activities to commemorate the 450th anniversary of his death have been planned in and around Zurich, centre of his reforming activity.

Soviet newspapers have recently taken note of increased religious activity and interest on the part of some citizens. Pravda, daily of the communist party, says the increased interest "cannot be explained just by tenacity of religious holdovers". An editorial urges more effective anti-religious propaganda in educational institutions and the mass media. The government daily Izvestia criticizes such manifestations as baptisms, religious marriages, crosses worn round the neck, and icons in apartments. It suggests these are not signs of a revitalization of religion but rather signs of snobbery, nostalgia or esthetic faddism.

Russian Orthodox priest Gleb Yakunin has reportedly begun a hunger strike in support of his right to have the Bible and other religious literature during his imprisonment. Founder of the Committee for the Defence of the Rights of Believers, he is serving a 10-year sentence. In a letter to USSR President Leonid Brezhnev, Yakunin says that "even in Nazi camps, priests had the right to have a Bible or a gospel book".

The Roman Catholic bishops of Belgium have voted (12-1-2) against a plan by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to install new nuclear missiles in west Europe, including 48 in Belgium. The bishops say refusal of the Belgian government to come out in favour of the plan is a "step forward which could help to put back on the track the process of detente, cooperation and respect for human rights".

Exorcisms -- church rituals to drive away evil spirits -- are reported increasing in Denmark, notwithstanding public opposition to them by at least one bishop of the dominant Lutheran church.

Pastors and catechists of the Evangelical [Lutheran] Church of Augsburg Confession in Poland at their annual meeting, in Warsaw last month, urged more access by the church to the mass media.

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Two African bishops -- United Methodist Thomas Bangura, Sierre Leone, and Roman Catholic John Njenga, Eldoret, Kenya -- have urged more candidates for ordination. Bangura noted that the denomination's theological college has no applications. Njenga urged parents to help clergy promote vocations to the ordained ministry.

Moderator I.H. Frempong of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana has urged the government to purge the police force to eradicate corruption, especially among border guards. He said the church is concerned about widespread lawlessness and indiscipline in the country, and said those in responsible positions must set examples of probity, integrity, and discipline in their lives and work. In Nigeria, Anglican Bishop Jonathan Onyemelukwe of Enugu said in a sermon that the country would be better off if its leaders all learned to exercise caution and restraint when they speak.

Honorary President Kenneth Greet, of the World Methodist Council, has written USA President Ronald Reagan and USSR President Leonid Brezhnev urging them to take joint initiatives on disarmament. Greet is also secretary of the British Methodist Conference.

Kenyan Anglican Bishop Henry Okullu of Maseno South diocese says some church leaders are abdicating their role as prophets to win political favour. "We are slowly adjusting ourselves to a situation in which certain politicians are using the name of Christianity for their political ends", he said in a lecture in Kitale. "We are saying nothing about this because we fear to be attacked in public or discredited in whatever way".

Three UK church leaders are among signers of an advertisement in the London Times suggesting specific measures richer nations could take to aid poorer ones. The ad appeared shortly before the opening of the North-South summit at Cancun, Mexico. It was also signed by four union leaders and eight politicians. Church signers were the archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie; the [Presbyterian] Church of Scotland general assembly moderator, Andrew Doig, and the moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, Morris West.

The massive anti-militarism rally which attracted an estimated 250,000 people to Bonn, capital of West Germany (FRG), had among its prime movers two church-related organizations which have provided alternative service opportunities for conscientious objectors to military service -- Action Reconciliation and Action Service for Peace. The worldwide arms race was a stated concern of the organizers though the signs and speeches often focused on proposals to station new missiles in west Europe and support given USA President Ronald Reagan's defence policies by FRG Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.



ECUVIEW: Christian-Marxist Dialogue in Hungary\*

*What has led to this official dialogue between Marxist philosophers and Christian theologians in Hungary?*

In the present tense world situation, it is increasingly necessary that all those who, from whatever ideological standpoint, have a sense of responsibility for the present and future of humanity should search for possibilities in terms of which they may join forces and cooperate in the common cause of humanity.

Another point is the internal situation of our beloved common country. For almost four decades, but especially in the last quarter of a century, our aims have been achieved and our results arrived at - in harmony with our special development - through the agreement and joint efforts of the creative majority of the nation.

*What is the basis of the state's approach to society generally known as the "alliance policy"?*

Society consists of people with different ideologies. This circumstance, which is an objective reality both for the state and the churches, must always be kept in mind in all our decisions in principle as well as in every practical step taken.

In the beginning great and decisive questions had to be solved in order to regulate state-church relationships. This was followed by a 'monologizing' period when both parties, essentially in independence of one another, explained their own opinions of the world, of what should be done for the welfare of humanity. At this stage, however, the germs of a readiness to come to a better understanding of each other were already present.

*What were the objectives of this dialogue?*

It was our common task to overcome any unjustified impatience to enter into talks as well as any uncertainty with regard to, or distrust of, a creative dialogue. We also had an excellent opportunity jointly to review the way covered so far, to examine and evaluate the still existing problems that have not been resolved yet, and to clear up the possibilities for the dialogue to be continued.

*What impact has dialogue with Christians had on Marxist thinking?*

In the course of our ongoing dialogue with the Protestant churches in Hungary, we Marxists had also to re-consider the conception we had formed of religion. We should not stand still at the thesis that religion is an idealistic worldview and, thus, that all forms of religion constitute an unbroken line. We are of the opinion that we are not to emphasize the ideological confrontation but the non-ideological components of the concrete religious theories, and to analyse the concrete role they play in a given social situation. The results of this theoretical elaboration has long been preceded by the insights of our church policy.

[Although ideological themes are inevitably present, even if in indirect form, in the dialogue,] its main theme concerns not the questions which separate us but those which unite us. Among them the first place is taken by the political and ethical insights of the Protestant churches with regard to the new society.

*Why has this first dialogue begun with Protestant theologians?*

The theology of the Protestant churches in Hungary, generally called the theology of service or diaconia, has called forth a new historical form of Christianity intent on a progressive and realistic elaboration of the position of socialist society and of its trends of development. In the line of practice and theory they have opened up a new stage in the advance of religion. This 'narrow path' can be a significant initiative and can give good impulses to east and west alike. I think this development may induce further examination by believers as well as Marxist researchers of religion in those countries where major Protestant churches are at work.

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\*This is an excerpt from an interview with State Secretary Imre Miklos, head of the Hungarian government office for church affairs, conducted by Attila Komlos, EPS correspondent and Reformed Church in Hungary journalist [Related story, page 4].

## ECUTEXT : Madras Recommendations -- Energy and the Churches\*

The theology of the relationship between Man and Nature must be re-examined. We are of the view that man should seek not to exercise domination over nature, but rather that he lives in harmony with it. The traditional theology of domination (in fact a theology of rape) should be replaced by a more appropriate theology of harmony.

The Churches have a prophetic role in the community. They have a responsibility in helping society with the formation of ideas about life styles still to come in future societies in the post oil/nuclear era. A few Christian individuals and groups may well be called to live now as if that post oil/nuclear era had already begun, and deny themselves the conveniences and luxuries that those sources of energy can provide. They will then be symbols and precursors of a new age.

We have seen how the choice of a certain energy technology may provide benefits for the rich, while creating even more problems for the poor. In such circumstances, the Churches should explicitly show their commitments to the poor and deprived sections of societies. The Churches cannot remain neutral and in such situations they ought to promote those energy choices which will favour the poor. Specifically, in the rural areas of the Indian sub-continent this generally means small scale, renewable energy technologies.

The influence of Churches can be considerable. They should use this influence to plead for long-term planning with regard to energy questions. Most democratic governments tend to consider only their own terms of office and are liable to act irresponsibly when evaluated in a long-term perspective.

Experience has shown that merely generating new technologies, without the appropriate social and community organization, does not allow technologies to be appropriated by the people. The Churches should use their influence to further community-building efforts. Through these communities, as well as through other channels, the Churches could help the energy situations in very practical ways, such as:...

- a) show how terribly skewed is the energy consumption pattern on a global scale. They can also help lay people understand better about the pros and cons of nuclear energy in a particular situation. In our experience of the Indian sub-continent, for example, nuclear energy is not one of the viable options.
- b) expose the anti-social nature of conspicuous consumption that tends to waste energy resources... Marriages and other social functions of rich families, in which the Church also has a role, have often become occasions to display wealth, such as large number of motor cars...
- c) set up small groups to help in the monitoring and the exchange of information available about energy technologies which are appropriate for the development of rural areas.

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\* The text is excerpted from one of four reports from a regional consultation in Madras earlier this year [2-8 March]. The consultation is one of a series "Energy for My Neighbour: Perspectives in the Developing Countries", under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. A Latin American consultation was set for Lima, 26-31 October.



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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 13 NOVEMBER 1981

SOUTH AFRICA MARRIAGE LAW  
DISOBEDIENCE COUNSELLED

Johannesburg (EPS) - The general assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa has decided its clergy should marry couples irrespective of race.

Marriages between persons of different races are illegal in South Africa. Its white-minority government says it will withdraw civil-marriage power from the denomination's clergy if they break the law.

Interior Minister Chris Heunis said he is "astonished" at the Presbyterian call, which he described as a "malevolent incitement" to challenge state power.

The assembly also urged its ministers to ignore official bans when preaching, and invited its congregations to peacefully protest the apartheid (race separation) system. Quoting banned people or publications is also against South African law.

In another church protest of apartheid, the London-based Council for World Mission announced the sale of its shareholdings in companies trading in South Africa -- about half of the council's investment portfolio.

Among the council's 28 member churches is the Johannesburg-based United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. The sale follows a decision by delegates of council members last August in Cambridge (UK).

A council statement on the sale says in part: "CWM has ... followed developments in South Africa very closely, and has made every effort to make its convictions known to those companies trading in South Africa with which it has had an investment interest. CWM has been impressed with the efforts of certain companies to improve the employment conditions of their work forces in South Africa, but regretfully does not see these leading to any positive changes in the fundamental concept of apartheid or in its implementation.

"Moreover, CWM sees no real evidence of peaceful change resulting from the trade and presence of the companies in South Africa. Those changes which have taken place in race relationships in South Africa seem to be of a cosmetic nature, and its government seems as intransigent as ever on apartheid, ... CWM is bound to recognise that any investment and trade with South Africa ultimately bolsters the government's policy of apartheid."

EPS



LUTHERAN-RC DOCUMENT  
SUGGESTS UNITY STEPS

Geneva (EPS) - According to the preface of a joint statement by the international Lutheran-Roman Catholic theological dialogue commission, the two Christian traditions "already have a remarkably similar vision of the goal of the ecumenical movement, and... there is an astonishing number of important practical steps which we can take together to achieve this goal".

The preface says that "may come as a surprise to readers, as it did to the members of the commission itself". The document, "Ways to Unity", was released in English at the end of October by the Lutheran World Federation, co-sponsor of the dialogue with the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

The 30-page booklet urges Lutherans and Roman Catholics to "continue this process of removing confessionally conditioned prejudices and misjudgments of other churches from the entirety of theological view of church history of doctrine since the 16th century".

Among specific steps the document urges are a "common orientation towards ... Scripture"; emphasis on the "central significance" of the sacraments; "ecumenical awareness and experience" among clergy of both traditions; cooperation in such areas as mission, broadcasting, Christian education, publishing, diaconal and charitable activities; "mutual participation in Sunday worship, at baptisms, weddings, and funerals, and at ministerial ordinations and installations"; and an end to "discrimination" and "proselytism".

EPS

USA ANGLICAN BISHOPS  
IN WEEKLY PEACE FAST

San Diego, California, USA (EPS) - The bishops of the Episcopal Church [USA] have announced they will undertake a "weekly act of fasting and prayer for the peace of the world" during the next year.

The commitment is part of a pastoral letter, "Apocalypse and Hope", issued by the Anglican leaders after their annual meeting [2 - 9 October].

The bishops also say that USA "budget shifts to increased military spending have meant government withdrawal from some sectors of social caring, and reduction in other sectors... As bishops we cordially urge business and industry to advance their charitable giving as a moral response to the looming increase in human privation".

They add that "to boost the capability of our dioceses to meet this new urgency of human need, we ... pledge an increase in our own regular giving, making use of our tax savings in 1981 as part of that increase".

EPS

CONSULTATION CONSIDERS AN  
ECUMENICAL CHURCH HISTORY

Basle (EPS) - The late medieval church council of Basle sat from 1431 to 1449. Marked by disputes and disagreements between the papacy which called it and the majority of the church leaders who assembled for it, it was not a model of church deliberation.

Nonetheless, a group of church historians and theologians assembled here to mark the 550th anniversary of its beginning and to reflect on the general question of contemporary church history in ecumenical perspective.

In a preliminary discussion paper prepared for the consultation, Lukas Vischer, head of the Protestant Office for Ecumenism in Switzerland, noted that "every church has its own distinctive picture of the church's journey through the centuries." He said the churches are still unable to agree in their understanding and presentation of the history of the church.

He also outlined six "unsolved questions and problems" for an ecumenical church history:

- confessional bias, which is "particularly obvious in the case of historical events which are fundamental for the existence of a particular confessional tradition " and other events which "imply a negative judgement on another tradition."
- assumptions about the church, particularly about the form and visibility of its continuity over the centuries.
- concepts of the form of society and the church's role in it.
- the prevailing understanding that history writing is a science.
- the role played by certain organizing concepts applied to history, such as "beginning-growth-decay" or "original purity-decline-repristination."
- traditional views of periods of church history (for example, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation era) which may be inadequate for a contemporary ecumenical approach.

The consultation met in four groups to consider ecumenical criteria for a contemporary evaluation of the council; criteria for an ecumenical history of the church in light of the extension of the church into Asia, Africa, the Pacific, and Latin America; church history as people's history; and the ecumenical teaching of church history.

EPS



PEOPLE'S STORIES IMPORTANT,  
CHURCH CONSULTATION ADVISES

Ayia Napa, Cyprus (EPS) - If the church wants to understand how powerless people analyze their political and social situation, it ought to pay attention to their stories.

That is part of the advice which emerged from a weeklong international consultation on political ethics held at the ecumenical centre here [18-24 October]. The gathering of 36 politicians, social scientists, ethicists, and theologians from 26 countries was the culmination of a series of regional meetings -- part of a long-term examination by the World Council of Churches of the issue of a "just, participatory, and sustainable society".

The consultation focused mainly on "people's participation", various issues of justice and power, and ways in which "ecumenical political ethics" might be developed.

As for how the church might better listen to what the poor and powerless are saying, a preliminary report urges special attention to their stories about their political struggles and commitments. "The way a story is told", it says, "already uses the basic understanding... of some theory of what power is and how it works".

Stories are also important, it adds, for a "critical recovery and reconstruction of people's history" and to "return culture and history to the people as their rightful owners and actors".

On the question of participation, the report urges churches to "embark on critical self-examination of their relationships and procedures so as to discourage any tendency towards elitism or leadership. They should seek to promote equitable and active participation of laity and clergy, women and youth".

The consultation also outlined several "signs of the times" which shape the context in which any ecumenical political ethics would be developed. Among them are increasing militarization, "dependence of political processes on economic structures", and a "growing role of religion in political life".

Contemporary political ethics, it was said, must include at least two dimensions -- the question of the legitimacy of political structures and decisions, and the "political aspirations of the people".

Finally, the consultation proposed several areas for further exploration and dialogue, among them:

- forms of political participation other than traditional systems of representative democracy.
- violence and non-violence in the struggle for social justice.
- various understandings of "people".
- the role of the biblical heritage in making ethical decisions
- Christian commitment as a challenge to a plurality of political positions.
- the potential of the ecumenical community as a political actor beyond established power interests.

## ECUBITS : News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The New York-based Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has announced it will canonize Nicholas II, the last Russian tsar, other members of the royal family, and about 8,000 others who died opposing the communist revolution in 1917. The ROCOR is not in official communion with most of world Orthodoxy, particularly the Moscow-based Russian Orthodox Church.

Sun Myung Moon, founder and head of the Unification Church, has been charged by USA authorities with several violations of USA tax laws.

A spokesperson for the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva says the USA government has given assurances that it will not turn back any refugees from Haiti or El Salvador able to prove they need asylum. Earlier, announcement of USA determination to turn back Haitians on fleeing their country by sea brought some USA church criticism. [EPS No.29, page1].

Leaders of the Christian Council of Lesotho have urged Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan to ensure that everyone in that southern African country is "free to express... views without fear of adverse consequences". Earlier this year, Christian editor Edgar Motuba was murdered and council president Benjamin Masilo was abducted. (He was later reported safe in neighbouring South Africa). [EPS No.25, page 8; No.27, page 6]. Council representatives were reported likely to meet with the prime minister again to continue discussions on "matters concerning justice and peace" and national insecurity.

In its 19 October issue, the West German magazine Spiegel raises questions about accounting procedures of the South African Council of Churches. It says SACC General Secretary Desmond Tutu diverted DM 33,000 from church funds for his house. A SACC reply says the charges arose in connection with a court case involving a former SACC employee (EPS No.28, page 3). It says the Tutu house money was from an anonymous donor and given him by the former SACC general secretary while Tutu was Anglican bishop for Lesotho. It calls "the distortions ... in the article ... clearly part of the wider propaganda machinery of a group desperate to destroy both the bishop and the council but reluctant to do the dirty job".

Tanjug, the Yugoslav news agency, reports a three-and-a-half-year prison sentence was given a Roman Catholic priest for hostile propaganda against the state. He reportedly called for an end to the "40-year-old chains" binding the country. Earlier, state authorities banned pilgrimages to a village in the priest's parish after thousands flocked there following a report of an appearance of the Virgin Mary to four children last spring.

The European regional committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches met in Belfast [18-22 September]. The agenda included a discussion of the place of church confessions and the role of WARC in the life of the Reformed church family.



## ECUVIEW: Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Movement\*

Convinced that all the churches are called to listen together to what 'the Spirit is saying to the churches' (Rev.2:7), each in its own historical and cultural situation, Orthodoxy joined in the ecumenical movement. It recognized that, in order to serve Christians and contemporary humanity, Christianity must close the gap between its present situation and the firm effective unity of the primitive church.

This gap is not only intolerable from the historical standpoint but is even counter to both witness and service. The situation to which the churches must return is one in which they can bear common witness and a united service in solidarity with one another.

Certainly Orthodoxy also had its special reasons for sharing in the ecumenical movement: the firm conviction, for example, that - speaking in all humility - its witness to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church is authentic and full, a witness which, being universal in character, must also be shared with the other churches.

Then, too, was an awareness that, despite their historical confessional division, the churches have preserved something essential in common. On the one hand, in becoming divided the churches have lost something essential which must of necessity be recovered; on the other hand, they have a deep fundamental ecclesial identity which is no less real for not being perfect.

As the Orthodox see it, the ecumenical movement should encourage this process of growing together, moving from the given unity, the implicit unity, towards the visible achieved unity. This is not a process of centralization nor one of deconfessionalization but one of integration in the succession of the apostolic church both in respect of the content of the faith and in the way we live this faith...

Orthodoxy has felt the need to make the meaning of the universal Church for the local church and vice versa known and understood not only in its own bosom but also in the other Christian confessions. Universal in its own structure, Orthodoxy has not sought to efface its own identity as universal body in the ecumenical dialogue with churches of other confessions. Quite the reverse. Its catholic dimension becomes even more explicit and influential in an ecumenical setting because ecumenism does not promote doctrinal confusion and should not be felt to be either a threat to our own dogmatic or cultural identity or as an effacement of it.

This is why today more than ever we are convinced that the World Council of Churches is a fruit of the desire of the churches to re-establish their visible unity and to bear common witness to the gospel message in the contemporary world. Without exaggerating its ecclesiological importance and its novel character in church history, the World Council of Churches furnishes a unique opportunity and setting for mutual challenge and exchange between traditions, cultures and nations and for interconfessional and intercultural dialogue.

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\*This is an excerpt from an address by Patriarch Justin, head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, during his visit to the World Council of Churches in October [EPS No.29, page 6]. It was translated from the French by the WCC Language Service.

## ECUVIEW: The African Refugee Crisis\*

Though it has only 10% of the world's population, the African continent has over half of its refugees -- between 4-6.3 million, according to a recent United Nations report. Africa thus is by far the largest repository of refugees and displaced people in the world. The plight of these refugees is among the worst as well, due to their sheer numbers and the poverty-stricken conditions under which they live.

Political upheavals and the inevitable aftermath of a bloodbath often result in the exodus of the country's skilled manpower: its doctors, its teachers, its engineers, its civil servants. This of course leads to a shutdown of many vital services. Displaced students, who were destined to become tomorrow's leaders, suddenly are relegated to living in slums and taking meagre handouts from charities.

Blame for the existence of most refugees cannot be primarily put on the vagaries of the weather; intolerance towards those of a minority or those out of power, disregard for basic human rights and brutal warfare have been the primary causes for Africa's refugee crisis. Today's leaders are finally coming to recognise this. No longer is colonialism made the sole scapegoat. For even if South Africa and Namibia were free tomorrow, the refugee problem would by no means disappear.

Still, many of the roots of the refugee crisis can indeed be traced to colonialism. When the various European colonisers of the 19th century got together to divide up Africa among themselves, they did so with the astuteness and foresight that one would give to slicing a pie. They ignored or paid no attention to local groups of common ethnicity, common language or common history. This resulted in artificial boundaries with many ethnic groups being split up.

Many ethnic and political conflicts of today, which have caused the flight of hundreds of thousands, indeed, millions, have been instigated by these various populations attempting to regroup themselves as well as recover what they consider to be their rightful land. African governments have agreed to maintain every square-inch of their colonially-inherited territory, no matter how imperfect the arrangements, to forestall even wider contention and bloodshed.

What can be done to rid Africa of the unwanted scourge of refugee displacements? Unfortunately, no magical solutions are in sight. As the Times of Zambia recently wrote: "Most of the refugees today are from independent African countries, and for this, Africa must hang her head in shame."

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\* This is an abridged version of a report by Ssalongo Ngoma, correspondent for All Africa Press Service, in which it appeared in full. APS is a news and features service of Africa Church Information Service, Nairobi. A weeklong consultation, "African Refugee--Challenge to the Churches" took place at the end of October in Arusha, Tanzania. It was sponsored by the All Africa Conference of Churches in collaboration with the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation. It also included participants from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Organization for African Unity.



ECUTEXT: Witness List for the International Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament\*

Monday, 23 November, 15.30-18: Theological Aspects

Roger Shinn, professor of social ethics, Union Seminary (New York)

Burgess Carr, visiting professor, Harvard University Divinity School; former general secretary, All Africa Conference of Churches

Edward Schillebeeckx, professor of theology, Catholic University of Nijmegen (Netherlands)

Günter Krusche, dozent for practical theology, Berlin

Tuesday, 24 November, 9-11: Development and Introduction of New Weapons Systems

George Rathjens, professor of political science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

A.A. Baev, academician secretary, Academy of Sciences, Moscow

Francesco Calogero, professor of theoretical physics, University of Rome

Tuesday, 24 November, 11.30-12.30, 14-16, 16.30-18.30: Limited Nuclear War Strategies

Brent Scowcroft, lieutenant general, USA Air Force

Robert Neild, Faculty Board of Economics and Politics, Cambridge University

McGeorge Bundy, professor of history, New York University; advisor to the late USA President Lyndon Johnson

Alexi Arbatov, chief researcher, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Academy of Sciences, Moscow

André Fontaine, editor-in-chief, Le Monde, Paris

Oskar Lafontaine, mayor, Saarbrücken, FRG

Anders Boserup, chairperson, Danish Royal Commission on Defence and Disarmament

Wednesday, 25 November, 9-11: Future of Arms Control Efforts

P.T. Podlesni, Institute of USA and Canada Studies, Academy of Sciences, Moscow

John Erickson, defence studies director, University of Edinburgh

Wednesday, 25 November, 11.30-12.30, 14-16, 16.30-17.30: New Approaches to Disarmament

Inga Thorsson, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; chairperson, United Nations Group of Experts on the Question of Disarmament and Development

Ben ter Veer, Inter-Church Peace Council (Netherlands)

Randall Forsberg, director, Institute for Defence and Disarmament Studies, Brookline (Massachusetts) USA

M. Domokos, Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sydney Bailey, chairperson, Council on Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament (UK)

Thursday, 26 November, 9-12.30 Third World Views of the Nuclear Arms Race and Proliferation

K. Subrahmanyam, director, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi; advisor to Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi

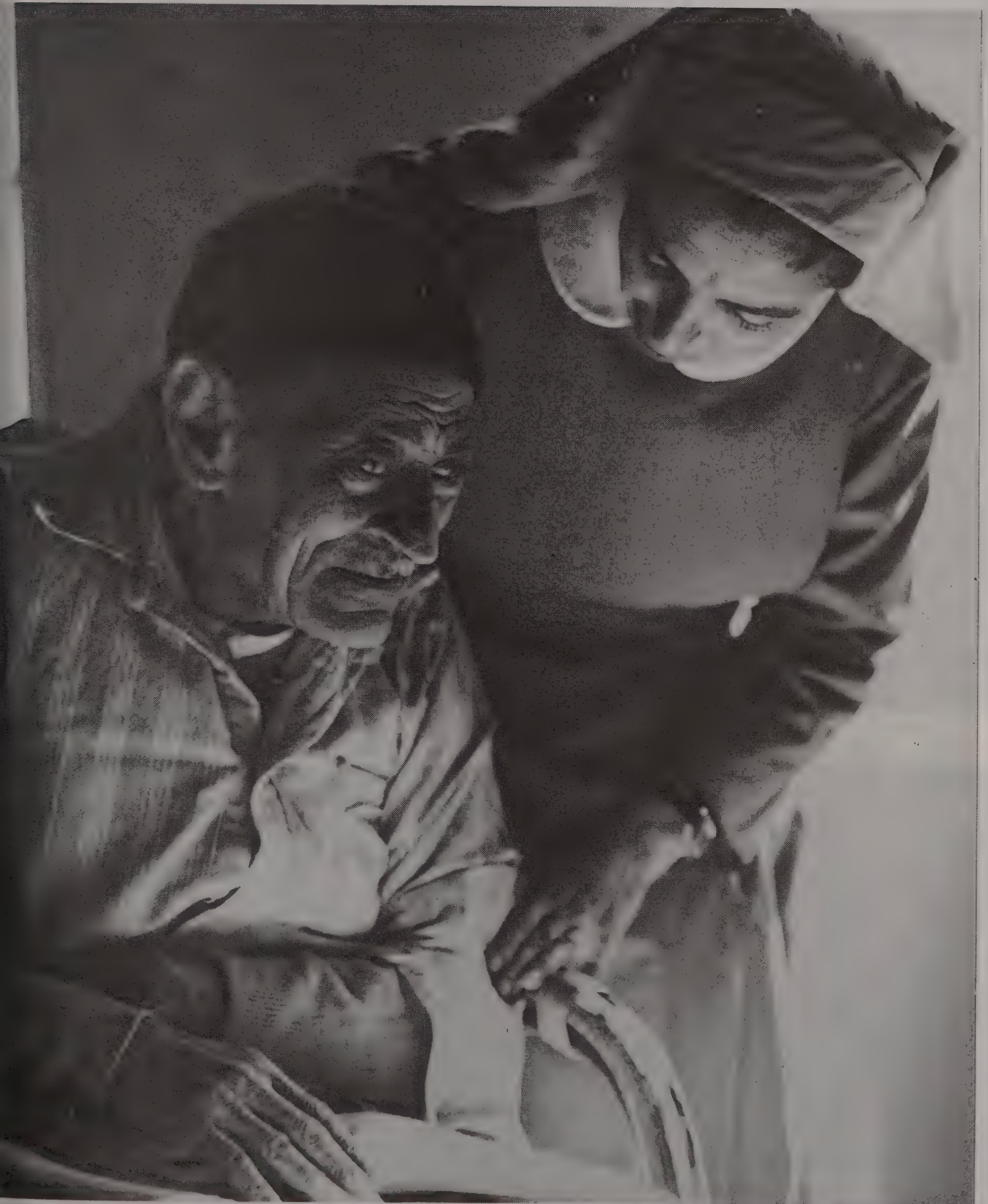
Paul Jabber, professor of Middle East studies, University of California (Los Angeles)

Abdul Minty, World Campaign Against Militarism and Nuclear Collaboration, Oslo

\*The hearing is sponsored by the World Council of Churches 23-27 November at the Free University, Amsterdam. Press facilities will be available. Three more witnesses are expected to be added to this list. Abdul Minty's testimony will be related particularly to South Africa, from which he is in exile.

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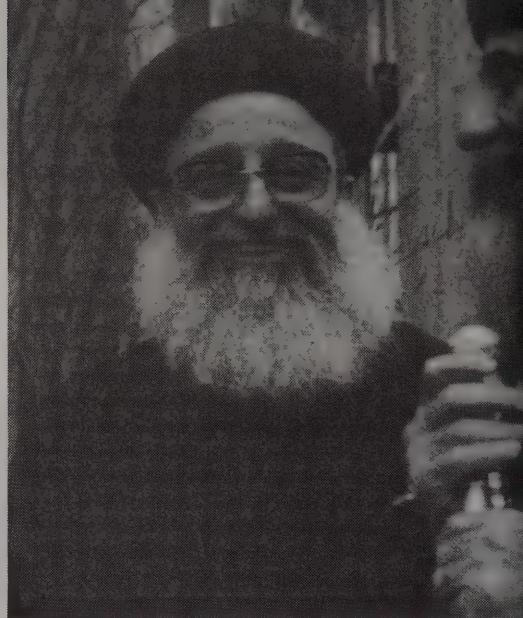
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## EGYPT



(2707)

(2706)

Among those killed in the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat was Bishop Samuel (2704, left, with Coptic Pope Shenouda II). His church portfolio included public and ecumenical affairs and social services. [EPS No.28, page1]. The largest Christian community in modern Muslim Egypt, Coptic Church is particularly society with visible contrasts between the traditional and modern (2705). The church has a strong monastic tradition. Bread for the eucharist is collected in the chapel of the el-Souriany monastery. (2707). The Auba Bishopry monastery hosts an international ecumenical conference (2706). The church also undertakes religious education (2708) and work among the aged (cover).

### ROMANIA

Patriarch Justin head of the Romanian Orthodox Church, visited World Council of Churches headquarters in October (2709) [This EPS, also EPS No.29, page 6]. The patriarch presented an icon to WCC General Secretary Phil Potter. Title of the image, "Jesus Christ, Life of the World", is also the theme of the next WCC Assembly 1983 in Vancouver (2710).



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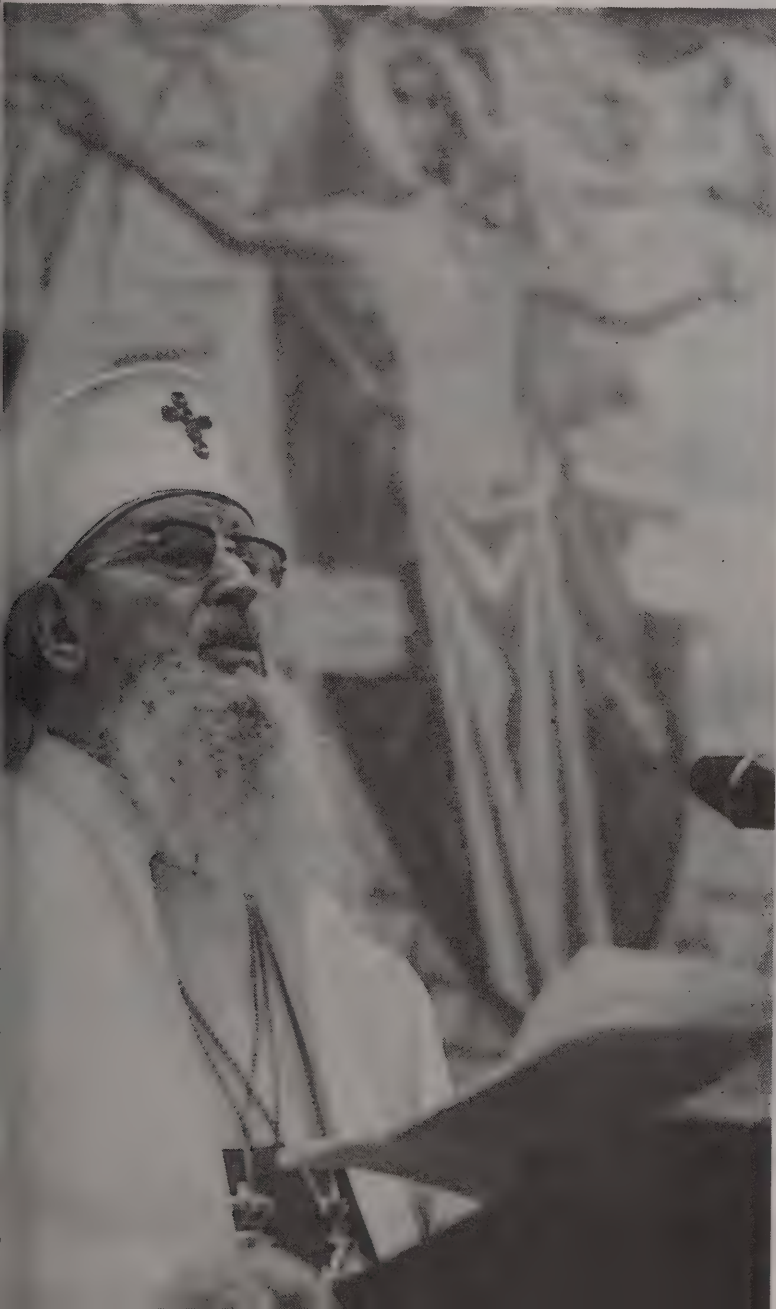




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(2714)



(2715)

## ENERGY

This Japanese oil refinery worker (2711) is part of the world's complex energy arrangements. An aspect of that system is being explored through a series of consultations under World Council of Churches auspices. Following two Asia meetings earlier this year, another "Energy for My Neighbour: Perspectives in Developing Countries" meeting took place in Lima at the end of October. [EPS No.29, page 11].

## ZIMBABWE

Zimbabwe President Canaan Banana, a Methodist ordained minister, was to visit the World Council of Churches in early November. Some aspects of Christian life in his southern African nation include prayers for rain (2712), a meeting of community leaders (2713), Christian education for children (2714) and the enlargement of a school (2715).

(Photograph No.2711 : WCC)

(Photographs No's : 2712, 2713, 2714 and 2715 : CIRIC)

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 20 NOVEMBER 1981



TOURIST 'CONTAINMENT'  
PROPOSED TO CONFERENCE

Stockholm (EPS) - A "policy of containment" may be needed to reduce ill effects of mass tourism by first-world people in the third world, according to a long-time student of the subject.

Ron O'Grady, former associate general secretary of the Singapore-based Christian Conference of Asia, made his suggestion during his presentation at a five-day international conference on church and tourism. It was jointly sponsored by agencies of the Church of Sweden and the World Council of Churches.

O'Grady said he has reluctantly concluded that it is "time we create tourist ghettos and keep them out of the way" in a "kind of Disneyland, if you like, in each third-world country". He said this would be "infinitely better than hordes of tourists tramping around" and generally interfering with the culture and way of life of third-world societies.

He also urged efforts to constrain "hippie" or "drifter tourists" - youthful first worlders who come to certain third-world areas for indefinite stays. On balance, he said, such people challenge the assumptions of materially poorer societies in a negative way, bringing "disenchantment and cynicism". He added that such tourists are "often patronizing and racist."

Though there was general agreement with O'Grady that the 30 million tourists who visit the third world annually are causing problems and disruptions which need attention, not all agreed that setting up enclaves would be the best solution.

The approximately 40 conference participants also dealt with such issues as false images in tourist advertising; differences between rest, free time, and leisure; questions of ownership and control of the tourist industry; and organized sex or prostitution tours to some third-world countries.

In terms of numbers, the great bulk of tourism is by North Americans and Europeans to their own or other first-world countries. The conference also heard from various participants about ministries in Scandinavia, Netherlands, USA, and UK to such people. Attention was given to ways in which cathedrals or other church buildings can be effective centres of ministry to their many visitors, especially those with little or no connection with or knowledge of the church.

The group completed preliminary work on a series of recommendations for education, pastoral care, and international church attention to the tourism issue.

Reflecting on the conference, Carlos Sintado, WCC secretary for renewal centres and movements, said its exposure of the "harsh realities" of tourism could help counter "excessive idealization" of the phenomenon. At its final session, the group approved a letter to European church leaders urging church action on concerns raised at the conference.

[The text of the letter, and other related material appear on pages 9-11, of this EPS].

ZIMBABWE PRESIDENT URGES  
MORE CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

Geneva (EPS) - The president of Zimbabwe says that despite lukewarm church support in general during the struggle for independence, he looks forward to the participation and involvement of the whole church in the former territory of Rhodesia, which was granted independence by the UK in 1980.

Canaan Banana, also an ordained Methodist minister, offered reflections on the church's role in his country during a visit to World Council of Churches headquarters here [2 November].

The western powers and the churches preached human rights during the day, he said, and supported the very structures upholding race separation by night.

"The majority of churches failed to understand the direction of the struggle for independence", he said. "They were lukewarm in responding to our efforts and to a large extent they fully supported the existing régime; even now a lot of our leadership cannot cross the river from the Rhodesia of yesterday to the Zimbabwe of today".

But he had much praise for the WCC and its support of the movement towards independence. He called it "an island of hope in a sea of despair and suffering. It was because of the actions of the council that the credibility of the church was maintained for many of our people", he said.

Grants by the WCC special anti-racism fund for humanitarian activities by the Patriotic Front, a leader in the independence fight, provoked negative criticism by some church people in the late 1970s.

Church involvement has to be directed at the level of the people - away from "theologizing and bureaucracy", Banana said. "Theologically speaking I see the point of departure for the church in involvement/action - rather than in praying for and theologizing about involvement.

"Theology has to be interpreted from within the situation of the human being," he continued. "People will not live by faith alone; they also need bread. Bread and faith must go together", he said.

Banana expressed regret over suspicions of churches in general when confronted with a government choosing a socialist path. He said the role of the church within any political structure should be one of participation and action in that situation.

He said his government's intention is not to force drastic changes to create a more participatory society. "There will not be a wholesale nationalisation of industry, for example - but if the church is hoping to be capitalist in Zimbabwe they are going to have a problem", he said.

EPS



MIDDLE EAST PATRIARCH SEES  
PROBLEMS WITH EVANGELICALS

New York (EPS) - The world head of Syrian [Oriental] Orthodoxy, Patriarch Ignatius Zakka I, says convert-seeking Evangelicals who voice strong support for Israel create problems for Middle East Christians.

At a stop here on a visit to his flock around the world, the Damascus-based hierarch said sectarianism mixed with politics threatens the delicate situation in his part of the world. He said missionaries who come to the area should work more closely with the established Christian traditions.

In an interview after the luncheon, Ghassan Rubeiz, Middle East secretary for the interchurch aid commission of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches, said examples of the patriarch's concern are the colour tv and two radio stations operated near the Israel-Lebanon border. The project was begun in 1979 by High Adventure Ministries, based in Van Nuys (California) USA.

Rubeiz said USA Evangelicals are "pouring money" into the three "Hope" stations, which promote "Christianity in the context of the born-again style, and in the context of gaining appreciation for Israel".

High Adventure President George Otis said in a separate telephone interview that "our objective is to bring hope, encouragement and peace to a very troubled area. We're there not taking sides, but to be a blessing ... to everyone ..."

EPS

CHRISTIAN WORLD COMMUNION  
EXECS HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, USA (EPS) - Representatives from 13 world organizations from 11 Christian traditions gathered here for the 25th annual meeting of the secretaries of Christian world communions [27-29 October].

Special attention was paid to religious liberty. The secretaries supported the "declaration on the elimination of intolerance and discrimination based on religion" currently before the United Nations General Assembly. The group also affirmed recent peace initiations by various church leaders.

Also high on the agenda, according to a report from the group, were ways to make the results of the many bilateral and multilateral theological dialogues better known and more effective in the church. The dialogues have generally reflected greater theological agreement than is popularly acknowledged.

Traditions represented at the meeting were Anglican, Baptist, Campbellite (Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ), Quaker, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Reformed, Roman Catholic, Adventist, and Salvation Army.

EPS

'CIVIL RELIGION' SUBJECT  
OF CHURCH CONSULTATION

Geneva (EPS) - The way Christmas is observed in some countries is one example of a phenomenon known as "civil religion". A weeklong consultation held here last week under the auspices of the Lutheran World Federation was an effort to deal with the subject internationally.

Participants spent some time developing a definition of civil religion. They called it "... a pattern of symbols, ideals and practices that legitimize the authority of civil institutions in society. It can be known through its ritual observances, holidays, sacred places, documents, stories, heroes and other behaviours found in or analogous to recognized historical religions".

Among the questions which surfaced during the gathering were:

- Can we speak of "common religious values" when the majority of our citizens do not practice religion?
- Why do many American churches place an American flag in church?
- Why do people who are not interested in the church nevertheless want church weddings, baptism of their children and burials?

In a paper on Christmas in contemporary West Germany (FRG), Klaus Hoffman said, "It is interesting to observe that this festival with its increasing emphasis on peace and security bridges the widest ideological tendencies from left to right. It can thus be assumed," he added, "that its broad address to nearly all social classes, confessions, religious parties, race groups, etc. makes this festival a prime example of what today can be understood as civil religion, a joint feeling and thinking which though in variations, unites all citizens."

EPS

LUTHERAN LEADERS MEET ON  
NUCLEAR THREATS TO PEACE

Geneva (EPS) - Amidst fears of a nuclear holocaust and large demonstrations throughout Europe in recent months, the nuclear threat to peace has become a special church focus.

A Lutheran World Federation consultation here [7-8 November] centred around a discussion of the spiritual and pastoral mandate of the church in the age of the neutron bomb. Nineteen Lutheran bishops and church presidents from East and West Europe and the USA attended.

The participants emphasized that churches in the East and West should work together to overcome the world tension and to stop the nuclear arms race. Support and coordination of Christian activities on an ecumenical level were recommended, as well as interfaith peace efforts..

[For a related story, on World Council of Churches' disarmament hearing in Amsterdam, see EPS No.27, page 3].

EPS



WORLD COUNCIL ASSEMBLY  
PREPARATIONS CONTINUE

Vancouver, (EPS) - Plans for the next World Council of Churches assembly, here in 1983, moved closer to completion as the international preparatory committee met for four days on the campus of the University of British Columbia. It was the first time the WCC group met with the national Canadian coordinating committee and the local planning group.

Progress reports from the local host committee highlighted plans for welcoming and accommodating about 4,000 people - delegates from the WCC's 300 member churches, advisors, visitors, journalists and others. The 14-member international committee, including representatives from South Africa, Norway, Indonesia, USA and USSR, toured the university campus and were received by city officials and church leaders.

The committee agreed on a 4-part framework in which to organize the major issues to be put before the assembly. These broad categories include: new ways of witnessing in a pluralistic world; new steps towards church unity and renewal; new imperatives for justice and peace; and new insights for to be made by learning and communication. Final endorsement of issues is to be made by the WCC executive committee next February.

Winner of the WCC international poster competition based on the assembly theme, "Jesus Christ - the Life of the World", was also announced. She is Heather Dau of Canada. She also shares a second prize with Neils Wamberg of Denmark.

EPS

CONSULTATION CONSIDERS  
ASIA AND PACIFIC ISSUES

Manila (EPS) - Several Asian and Pacific issues - and their relationships - were on the agenda for participants from several countries in the two regions at a World Council of Churches gathering here [ 28 September - 3 October].

The group of about 25 considered several issues and church response to them: the role of Japan and Australia as major regional powers, nuclear testing and radioactive waste disposal in the Pacific, the role and strength of the military in various countries and the military presence of major world powers in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and "the struggle for independence from colonial and neocolonial domination."

Hosted by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, the gathering was organized by the WCC Churches' Commission on International Affairs, and endorsed by the Pacific Conference of Churches.

The meeting produced three sub-group reports - on issues common to the two regions, human rights, and the role of the church.

The human rights report emphasizes three issues in the "anti-colonial struggle" - "militarization, irresponsible and immoral use of nuclear power, and the dominant control of transnational corporations." The church-role report deals with research and study, information sharing, church leadership, human rights, theological reflection, and peace.

The third report includes critiques of "western capitalist economic 'development'" activities, coercive institutions, "brutal police violence and coercive propaganda institutions," and the "militarist political economy."

EPS

CHURCH CONFERENCE CONSIDERS  
AFRICAN REFUGEE SITUATION

Arusha, Tanzania (EPS) - The millions of refugees in Africa were the subject of a continent-wide, church-sponsored gathering here [26-30 October].

Walter Makhulu, president of the All Africa Conference of Churches and archbishop of the [Anglican] Church of the Province of Central Africa, urged churches to work together on refugee problems, rather than proceed so individualistically.

Ninan Koshy, international affairs director of the World Council of Churches, cited human-rights violations as among the major causes of the African refugee situation, which he called "one of the most acute problems of the world. There have been no 'boat people' to lend dramatic cachet to the situation in Africa", he added, "but its extent and urgency are unprecedented".

The human-rights factor, he said, is "two dimensional", including "violations of human rights that are responsible for people leaving their countries" and "the human rights that the refugees are given or denied".

Among points made in the reports from small group sessions during the week are that churches within and outside Africa should help their members to understand root causes of refugee movements, work with governments to ensure respect for basic human rights, work for voluntary refugee repatriation, and seek to increase cooperation and coordination among governments and international organizations dealing with refugees.

Conference sponsors were the WCC, ACC, and Lutheran World Federation. It was attended by church leaders and refugee workers from a score of African countries.

EPS

ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The two largest USA Presbyterian denominations and the Presbyterian Church of Mexico have established a joint office in San Antonio (Texas) USA to work on special problems of Mexicans illegally in the USA, and other border issues.

A study of Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, and Roman Catholic clergy in New Zealand says nine in 10 affirm public protest by clergy against racial discrimination, but only one in six has taken part in such protests. Similar differences between affirmation and participation were evident on such questions as clergy roles in industrial conciliation (75%, 5%) and therapy for drug addicts (90%, 10%).

An ad hoc planning group met in Geneva [27-30 September] and recommended a resumption of the official international Reformed-Roman Catholic dialogue, with a focus on the doctrine of the church. The first dialogue phase ran from 1970-77 on the theme "The Presence of Christ in Church and World". A decision of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches executive committee on the proposal could come next August.



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Members of the council of the European Baptist Federation have urged that the USA-USSR European nuclear disarmament talks to begin later this year be "conducted not from a position of military strength, but rather in a spirit of understanding and with a readiness and desire for detente". Also at the council meeting, David Russell, secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland was succeeded as council president by Stanislav Svec, general secretary of the Baptist Union in Czechoslovakia.

At their annual conference, the 13 bishops of the [Lutheran] Church of Sweden urged new restrictions on the purchase of hard liquor, in an effort to deal with alcohol abuse, particularly in certain parts of the country and among young people.

Two bishops of the [Lutheran] Church of Sweden have urged obligatory pre-marriage instruction here. Said Uppsala archbishop and church primate Olof Sundby, "Nobody is even permitted to drive a car without proper training. Why then should people be permitted to marry without any training in how to make a go of it?"

The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia has formally proclaimed the last Russian tsar and thousands of others who died opposing the Soviet communist revolution of 1917 saints. [EPS No.30, page 5]. Reacting to the canonization, a Soviet newspaper called it "sacrilege to pay homage to a man who stained his name with numerous crimes". It added that the ceremony's purpose was to "encourage and unite the last of a dying band of monarchists and breathe life into the ludicrous idea of restoring the Russian throne". The Orthodox Church in America, which was formally granted its independence from the Russian Orthodox Church in 1970 and which, unlike the much smaller ROCOR, continues in communion with the patriarchate in Moscow, said in a brief statement that the ROCOR canonization was a "unilateral action". Quoting a verse from the New Testament book of Acts, the OCA said, "if this undertaking is of men, it will fail, but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them".

The executive committee of the South African Council of Churches has resolved to "appoint a commission to investigate the affairs and administration of the council, with special reference to the period from 1975 onwards, and to prepare a report of its findings which will be made available to the press and the public". The committee took its action "in the light of the inadequate, inaccurate and confused information which has been conveyed to the general public recently", especially concerning the administration of SACC finances. [See EPS No.30, page 5; and EPS No.28, page 3].

Amnesty International has included a Roman Catholic bishop long imprisoned in China and the executive head of the Ethiopian Evangelical [Lutheran] Mekane Yesus Church in recent appeals for prisoners of conscience. The Ethiopian Lutheran leader, Gudina Tumsa, disappeared in July 1979.

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Growing interest is reported in theological training courses for lay people under the auspices of various Danish municipalities. On the other hand, interest in conferences for wives of pastors in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark is reported on the wane.

Church News from Denmark reports that during a recent visit to the Danish Missionary Society, a delegation of seven Indian Christians visited many Danish homes and finally asked to see a poor home. "It was difficult to find one," CND says. "The poor home they visited, they called rich."

New translations of the Hebrew Scriptures into Danish and modern Greelandic are proceeding under the auspices of the Danish Bible Society. They are expected to be ready in 1990 and 1985 respectively.

The chairperson of the Danish parliament's church committee has declined a request from the Christian People's Party that a law be introduced to make religious education for children compulsory again. Currently, parents may have their children excused from it.

A Danish Lutheran parish in Copenhagen is allowing Muslims to worship in its church hall. No objection from parish members is reported, though a few complaints from outside have been registered.

Danish radio is planning an adult Christian education series. The last effort, in 1978-79 was widely criticized on grounds that church people in general couldn't understand what was being presented.

Pending a selection of a new Jesuit superior general to replace the ailing Pedro Arrupe, Pope John Paul II has appointed a close Vatican associate, Paolo Dazza, to take charge of the 27,000-member order. Assistant Superior General Vincent O'Keefe has been handling day-to-day affairs since Arrupe's stroke last August.

Jarl Wahlstroem, a 63-year-old Finn, has been elected the 12th worldwide general of the Salvation Army. He received the required two-thirds majority on the third ballot of the Army's High Council, meeting in London. He succeeds the retiring Arnold Brown, a Canadian, in mid-December.

A three-day, 50-person Church of England consultation on racism has recommended several steps, including greater ethnic-minority representation on elected church bodies, increased minority representation in the church work force, fostering vocations to the ministry among minority persons, increased minority enrollment in church schools, and independent review of complaints against the police. It also recommended official Church of England contributions to the World Council of Churches' fund to combat racism and church disengagement from banks and other companies doing South African business.



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

An association of eight non-white South African Reformed denominations has urged a moratorium on dialogue with South Africa's white Dutch Reformed Church until it ceases support for the white-minority government's system of race separation. The Alliance of Black Reformed Christians in South Africa, formed last month, said that "for the moment, we have come to the realization that, in the present situation, silence and the refusal to speak with the Dutch Reformed Church on their terms is the most effective means of communication". It urged overseas churches to take a similar stand. Alliance denominations include the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa, Reformed Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church of Africa, Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, United Congregational Church, and three DRC "daughter churches" -- Dutch Reformed Church in Africa (black), Dutch Reformed Mission Church (mixed race), and Reformed Church in Africa (Indian).

EPS

## ECUTEXT: Letter from Church Tourism Conference to European Church Leaders\*

Tourism, being a process of human encounter, provides unlimited possibilities for mutual sharing of cultural values and natural resources, and establishing personal contacts to promote the unity of humankind. However, tourism in its present form often disrupts the way of life of both visitor and host by encouraging the tourist:

- (1) to indulge in an extravagant lifestyle in ghettos created by the tourist trade ... reaping the benefits of an infrastructure geared to the comfort of the tourist rather than to the basic needs of the local people;
- (2) to exploit those in a weaker economic position by using them as servants and prostitutes... enticing them away from the productive sector so essential to developing countries to the service sector which ultimately benefits mainly the transnational corporations and travel syndicates;
- (3) to impact the host culture in a negative way, by showing a lack of respect for religious/local traditions...

One of the glaring injustices brought about by a modern tourism is the exploitation of Third World women and children as prostitutes, and the actual traffic in Asian women...

We are aware that the passive attitude of Christians in the first world can be attributed to their lack of awareness. It is therefore that we appeal to you, the church leaders of Europe, to take action in accordance with the resolutions and recommend actions of our conference...

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\* Approved by participants, from 22 countries, at a conference on church and tourism in Stockholm, 2-6 November. Story: This EPS, page 1 .

EPS

## ECUTEXT: A Code of Ethics for Tourists\*

1. Travel in a spirit of humility and with a genuine desire to learn more about the people of your host country.
2. Be sensitively aware of the feelings of other people, thus preventing what might be offensive behaviour on your part. This applies very much to photography.
3. Cultivate the habit of listening and observing, rather than merely hearing and seeing.
4. Realise that often the people in the country you visit have time concepts and thought patterns different from your own; this does not make them inferior, only different.
5. Instead of looking for that 'beach paradise' discover the enrichment of seeing a different way of life, through other eyes.
6. Acquaint yourself with local customs - people will be happy to help you.
7. Instead of the Western practice of 'knowing all the answers' cultivate the habit of asking questions.
8. Remember that you are only one of the thousands of tourists visiting this country and do not expect special privileges.
9. If you really want your experience to be "a home away from home", it is foolish to waste money on travelling.
10. When you are shopping, remember that 'bargain' you obtained was only possible because of the low wages paid to the maker.
11. Do not make promises to people in your host country unless you are certain you can carry them through.
12. Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences in an attempt to deepen your understanding. It has been said that 'what enriches you may rob and violate others'.

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\*This code was developed at a 1975 meeting sponsored by the Christian Conference of Asia. It has since been circulated under church and corporate auspices, especially in the Asia and Pacific regions.

EPS



## ECUVIEW: Tourism and the Third World\*

For the past twenty years, the tourism industry has been growing at a rate which confounds all predictions. Today it is number one, and still growing. It outstrips oil as the major industry of the world; it employs more people than any other industry; Americans spend more on their leisure than they do on defense. The list of such economic and social indicators seems endless. Despite recession, unemployment, oil crises, inflation and political upheaval, tourism continues its upward march undaunted.

Until recently, this growth has gone unchallenged. A few isolated voices were raised about some social consequences of unchecked tourism, but these have had little significant impact. The industry has continued to generate such enormous wealth and engage in such profligate spending that countries in search of economic independence and development have accepted tourism with undisguised enthusiasm.

But now a certain reticence is being detected. Countries which had fallen over themselves to get a new Hilton-American Express-Pan Am service are starting to ask whether the benefits are quite as large as expected. This is particularly true of those countries which we call the Third World. Many of those poor countries are now expressing reservations about some aspects of tourism. To understand why, we must begin with the interaction between people who are poor and their affluent guests.

Consider the poor. They are people who will never be tourists. When they speak of travel they mean going on foot or in a crowded bus to the next village or town. Possibly they will travel for a wedding, funeral or religious festival, but their travel will not be for pleasure. Family income is barely sufficient for survival and there is no extra money available for luxury travel. Indeed, when they are thinking of luxury, their minds cannot stretch far beyond a bottle of soft drink or a ride on the back of a bicycle. The concept of a paid holiday or expenditure on leisure travel or visiting a foreign culture is totally outside their conceptual framework.

Into the land of the poor come the tourists. At first only a few courageous and usually sensitive souls make the visit and are rewarded with all the courtesy and hospitality of traditional societies. Later the numbers increase and improved facilities for travel are required. Surveys are made of possible tourist resorts and great profits are projected. The host community is persuaded that tourism will bring the blessings of employment, of foreign funds and the development of natural resources for the good of the whole community. The contracts are signed, the money slips under the counter, the jumbo jets begin to fly in, and a major qualitative change begins in the life of the whole society...

It is estimated that about 500 million working people now receive an annual paid holiday. This means that the modern tourist class is made up of farmers and factory workers, secretaries and plumbers, and, given the generous unemployment benefits of some welfare states, even the unemployed can become tourists. To be a tourist no longer means great wealth.

While many tourists are now simple working class people in their home country, when they travel overseas, they suddenly become rich. For the first time in their life, they have others to serve them, make their beds, drive them in private cars, massage their back and serve their every whim. Their new extravagant lifestyle becomes possible only because of the economic disparity between the two countries. So while the tourists often live very humbly in their home environment, they become nouveau riche in the host country. For many it is a heady experience and can quickly become addictive.

When this tourist group visits an affluent country the possibility of friction is much less. There is a common cultural history, similar social values and enough language for communication. Equally important is the fact that the host country has all the facilities normally demanded by tourists.

Poorer nations lack this infrastructure. They are asked to make the leap from a predominantly rural-based economy into a service-oriented tourist nation without passing through an intermediate stage of industrialisation. Money is diverted from social projects to build roads and bridges to serve the tourists; drainage facilities are inadequate so raw sewerage is pumped into the sea; the electrification of villages is postponed because of the need to place air-conditioning, elevators and many other electrical requirements in hotels; increased demand for certain foods and consumer goods by tourists raises the price of these goods in the local market; money which is needed for housing, health care, schools and agricultural development is diverted to meeting the ever-increasing needs of a foreign elite. These are among the symptoms which come as soon as a developing nation makes tourism one of its priorities...

The assumption that this new [tourist] industry will automatically improve the situation of the poor is false. Although there is certainly economic benefit to sections of the host community and while many new jobs are generated, the overall improvement in the living standard of the people is much less than is claimed. Indeed, in some areas of social life, the developing nation may lose more than it gains. Tourism is not a magic wand which will solve a nation's ills and there are situations in which these ills will even be compounded.

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\*This is a portion of a presentation by Ron O'Grady at an international conference on church and tourism in Stockholm, 2-6 November [Stories elsewhere in this EPS]. O'Grady, a New Zealander, is currently living and writing in the USA after serving as associate general secretary of the Singapore-based Christian Conference of Asia. He estimates that about 30 million tourists - about 10% of the annual total - travel to the third world.

## ECUVIEW: The Task of Contemporary Church History\*

How is the task of church history to be defined in the light of present developments in the ecumenical movement?

1. The task is to present the history of the una sancta catholica. In the presentation an attempt must be made to recall the history of the whole Church. The presentation must lead up to the una sancta catholica which is called to bear witness together to the Gospel today. It cannot simply be an introduction to one particular church community. Even when limited themes are taken up, they must be set within the context of the whole Church.
  - The presentation must be characterized by catholicity in time. In other words, all periods of history have a claim to be remembered. Ecumenical church history seeks to trace the course of history through all centuries.
  - The presentation must also be characterized by catholicity in space. In other words, it must be interested in and pay attention to the churches in the whole Oikoumene. Ecumenical church history seeks to transcend the geographical limits in which some presentations are imprisoned.
  - The presentation must be informed by awareness of the catholicity of the whole People of God. In other words, it must pay attention to the whole Church, and not least to the history of believing laos. Its interest must not be dictated by conscious or unconscious hierarchical class or sectional distinctions. Ecumenical church history sets out to include in its presentation even groups whose history is all too easily ignored for example because no written source materials are available. This applies in particular to oppressed and persecuted groups.
2. To carry out the task of ecumenical church history, a catholic spirituality or spirituality of the whole is required. What does this mean?
  - a realization that the una sancta catholica is greater than one's own church. The basis of this catholic spirituality is the expectancy that the Holy Spirit is at work wherever Christ's name is invoked. It does not limit His operation to a particular community. It does not accept that, on the basis of certain ecclesiological or doctrinal presuppositions, certain Christian communities are from the outset excluded from attention and interpretation. It is not satisfied with an agreement on a "purely historical level", but reflects on the consequences of such agreement and deliberately seeks to clarify the effects of earlier interpretations in history.
  - The spirituality of the whole requires a willingness not to ignore the dark aspects of history. It is aware that the history of the Church includes errors and failures. It does not dispute these negative aspects nor repudiate its own responsibility for their consequences (e.g. the Church's role in the slave trade, antisemitism, witch hunting, etc.).
  - This spirituality means the conviction that the Church is called in Christ to be one community and that division is therefore a contradiction of the will of Christ. This summons to unity accompanies the Church throughout the generations.
3. If we are to advance in the direction of a common interpretation of history, we need a clear agreement about the criteria underlying the presentation and the methods employed.
  - No presentation is innocent of theological and ecclesiological assumptions. A common presentation will only be possible if these assumptions are brought out into the open and critically examined.
  - A critical comparison of the different assumptions can help us to recognize that the previous presentation rested on too narrow a basis and needs to be corrected and supplemented.
  - It is absolutely indispensable that we should be prepared to examine our own interpretation in the light of the sources and other data. This critical study of the facts can make us aware of unconscious theological and ecclesiological assumptions. It enables corrections to be made.
4. Every interpretation of history remains, in principle, open to revision. Our attempt to present church history from an ecumenical perspective will not produce the definitive account. The conflict about the significance of the history for the contemporary Church will continue. The object of the exercise is rather to achieve a new style of approach. The debate about the significance of history is not conducted primarily between different traditions but takes place within the ecumenical fellowship which holds the different traditions and cultural contexts together.

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\*This is an excerpt from material prepared by Lukas Vischer for a consultation in Basle marking the 550th anniversary of the Council of Basle [EPS No.30, page 3]. Vischer directs the Protestant Office for Ecumenism in Switzerland.



# EPS

## Ecumenical Press Service

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## ETHIOPIA TAKES OVER CHURCH HEADQUARTERS

Addis Ababa (EPS) - The Ethiopian government has taken over the US\$ 1 million headquarters of the Ethiopian Evangelical [Lutheran] Church Mekane Yesus here.

The takeover brought church reaction from around the world, including messages from the Geneva-based World Council of Churches and Lutheran World Federation, to both of which the EECMY belongs.

On 11 November, church officials were given 30 hours to vacate their multi-floor building, which includes about four dozen offices and about half a dozen apartments for church workers.

A small group of soldiers reportedly arrived on 16 November, after church officials had earlier refused four times to turn over the keys. "They took the building by force - the soldiers", a church official reportedly said. "There was no shooting. We gave them the keys".

News agency reports quoted a "prominent church official" as saying "We have no place to go, no place to work... We asked the housing ministry official to give us another office, but he said he didn't know about that. In our office, several families were living. They have no house to live in now. They wouldn't give them any shelter... We appealed everywhere. We have to pray to God only".

The building will reportedly be used as a law court. The downtown building of Emanuel Baptist church was reportedly taken over the previous week. Since the Marxist government came to power in 1974, it has nationalized other church and non-church property for government offices and programmes.

In a message to Ethiopian Head of State Mangistu Haile Mariam, WCC Acting General Secretary Todor Sabev said the takeover would "hinder the effective witness of the church and the church's involvement in humanitarian work and development of the people of Ethiopia.

"The EECMY is an active member of the WCC and an effective instrument of the council's work", he continued. "Therefore the WCC appeals to you and your government to reconsider your decision, which... will jeopardize the life of the EECMY and its service to the people of Ethiopia".

In a message to Tadesse Terrefe, head of the Ethiopian permanent mission in Geneva, LWF General Secretary Carl Mau expressed his organization's concern about the consequences of the action on the EECMY's life and work. He noted the denomination's efforts over the years to work with government authorities on programs of assistance and development. Mau asked for "clarification on this matter... at your earliest convenience".

The LWF leader urged LWF member bodies to pray for the EECMY and "demonstrate their solidarity with it in any way they deem appropriate". Mau also sent a personal letter to EECMY President Emmanuel Abraham.

Ethiopia's 31 million people are mostly Christian or Muslim, in roughly equal numbers. Most of the Christians are Ethiopian [Oriental] Orthodox. The 500,000-member EECMY is the largest of the smaller Christian bodies.



TWO CHURCH UNIONS DELAYED;  
UK CHURCH COVENANT DEBATED

Geneva (EPS) - Delays have been announced in proposed church unions in two countries in recent weeks. And plans for a covenant among four UK denominations have run into opposition, although the groups' governing bodies have given preliminary approval.

In Ghana it was announced that a union of Methodists and two Presbyterian denominations has been postponed again, this time from 1982 to 1986. The delay is reportedly to allow for further education of the memberships about the plan.

In New Zealand, church union negotiators are reported returning to the drawing boards following votes on a union plan by Methodists and Presbyterians. The current plan was drafted at a time when Anglicans were expected to be part of the reunion.

With the Anglicans on the sidelines now, the favourable votes by the other two groups were not considered strong enough to proceed without modifications.

One sticking point in the UK is a part of the covenant which would introduce the historic episcopate into the Methodist and United Reformed Churches, the major partners with the [Anglican] Church of England in the plan, which also includes the Moravians.

Some Anglican opponents consider the covenant too vague about bishops. But some Reformed and Methodist objectors say the covenant states or implies more about the significance of bishops than they are prepared to. (The United Reformed Church has Presbyterian and Congregational roots).

On the other hand, a recent conference of ecumenical officers and others involved in local ecumenical projects in England and Wales urged acceptance of the covenant as a "vital...key to unlock legal and institutional barriers designed for an age when the churches wanted to remain separate". Further covenant decisions by national church governing bodies are expected in 1982.

[An international meeting of representatives of actual and proposed united and uniting churches was scheduled for Colombo, Sri Lanka, 18-25 November. Coverage is planned for the next EPS].

EPS

ISRAEL CLOSES UNIVERSITY;  
CHURCHES COUNCIL PROTESTS

Geneva (EPS) - The World Council of Churches has urged Israel to reopen Birzeit University, a major Palestinian educational institution in the Israeli-occupied West Bank area.

Israel closed the university 4 November following demonstrations by its students and others protesting Israeli occupation. The university says Israel is making it a "scapegoat for the whole Palestinian population in the occupied territories by projecting it as a hot-bed of political activism and resistance against occupation", which includes "military violence and oppression against civilians and institutions".

The WCC telegram to Israeli Defence Minister Ariel Sharon also urges him to "terminate arrest status of all... university personnel, as we know that such restrictive measures will not ultimately serve a process of justice, reconciliation and peace in the territories".

Israeli authorities have said the university will be reopened next January.

EPS

FINN STUDY CRITIQUES STATE-  
CHURCH 'SALVATION MONOPOLY'

Helsinki (EPS) - A study by a Finnish Lutheran pastor published by the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland's research centre faults the "state-ecclesiastical salvation monopoly" and church operations which uncritically adopt commercial attitudes.

In "Clerical Identity in a Bourgeois-Proletarian Society", Jaakko Jaatinen says "the message of the church has become a product called the gospel, to be marketed to as many people as possible, with target groups in mind". Thus, he adds, "people...are reduced to consumers of congregational services".

The study explores the effects of making the job of the ordained minister more or less like that of any other paid professional. If ministry is just like other jobs, it loses its "sacral character", and ministry "performed as remunerative employment is not in a position to expose the radical nature of social fragmentation, much less remedy it", he suggests.

The study says an example of the change in attitude over the years is mirrored in the church's clergy association, which has become a "rock-hard trade union, whereas earlier it was a fraternal association of people performing the work to which they have been called".

EPS



USA CHURCHES COUNCIL ASKS  
MEETING ON USA BUDGET CUTS

Cleveland, Ohio, USA (EPS) - The governing board of the [USA] National Council of Churches has called for a broadly based meeting next year to discuss the response of USA religion to what an NCC release calls "the present crisis in meeting human needs caused by massive federal budget transfers away from human services".

An accompanying background paper, "Conscience Alert", outlines "numerous examples of the human suffering being caused by recent changes in U.S. public policies". It also notes possible effects outside the USA because of "our accelerated shift from development aid to military assistance".

In a resolution on El Salvador, the board of the 32-denomination council urged the USA to "take diplomatic initiatives to effect the termination of military assistance to all groups in El Salvador" and to "terminate its present policy of providing military and economic assistance to the governing junta" there.

James Andrews, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and a member of an NCC delegation which spent half a week visiting El Salvador church leaders in late October, said "repression that approaches genocidal proportions is a fact of life in El Salvador, and the current military-political government is responsible for the huge majority of such murders, disappearances, imprisonments, tortures, mutilations, and rapes".

In other action, the board:

- Chose Indiana United Methodist Bishop James Armstrong to succeed American Baptist Churches minister and Reformed Church in America staff executive M. William Howard as NCC president for a three-year term starting next 1 January.
- Began to form a special panel to examine the NCC's future and make recommendations about "the strongest and most effective ecumenical instrument possible".
- Sent a message of support to Egypt's Coptic Church in the wake of the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat earlier this year.
- Urged adoption of the United Nations Draft Declaration on Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief.
- Asked the USA government to encourage a resolution of issues related to the 1974 Turkish intervention in Cyprus.
- Urged opposition to USA administration military policies as likely to increase the chances of nuclear war and being "utterly in conflict with the gospel of Christ".
- Re-elected Presbyterian Claire Randall as NCC general secretary. An anonymous letter was sent to the board urging she not be reappointed.
- Urged churches to increase young adult ministry.
- Adopted several priorities for the 1982-84 period: spiritual renewal and strengthening of congregations, peace making, human rights and racial justice, ethics and technological innovation, economic justice, and individuals and families in human community.

CHURCH AID APPEAL  
FOR ANGOLA BEGUN

Geneva (EPS) - The World Council of Churches interchurch aid commission has appealed for US\$ 1.3 million to support efforts by the Council of Churches in Angola to help persons affected by the drought and displaced by South African military action in the southern part of the country.

Commission Director Jean Fischer says "drought in the main crop areas has brought the food situation to a critical point... To this already grim situation, the major South African incursion of August 1981 added new and urgent dimensions", he adds. "More people from the southern provinces were forced to leave their homes to seek security further north and the gathering in of the harvest was further disrupted".

He calls the Angolan government's agreement for the church effort "a remarkable opportunity for the churches in Angola". The appeal includes emergency assistance in 12 categories - food, seeds, blankets, used clothing, tents, medicines, vehicles, agricultural tools, construction material, soap, school material, and transport and administration.

The Angolan Council of Churches, formed in 1977, includes 12 member and two associated denominations. Traditions represented include Congregational, Baptist, Reformed, Methodist, and Kimbanguist. [Related Ecuview, this EPS, page 9].

EPS

VIOLENCE SAID ONLY  
CREDIBLE RESPONSE

Arusha, Tanzania (EPS) - A spokesperson for the African National Congress, a group struggling against the white-minority government in South Africa, says "liberation movements were responding with violence because it was the only credible means to confront the oppressor's violence".

A report from Nairobi-based Africa Church Information Service does not identify the spokesperson, who attended a church consultation on the Africa refugee situation, here.

The ANC representative said to condemn their armed struggle is to ask liberation movements to commit suicide, given violence used against the groups by a government which "talks sense" only if confronted with equal force.

Noting church concerns that humanitarian aid might instead be used to buy arms, the ACIS report quotes the representative as declaring, "We have plenty of guns. We do not need church funds to buy guns; in fact we have more guns than food".

The spokesperson said more awareness is needed among Christians about the work of such movements and the nature of their struggle, especially as it intensifies and it becomes essential to "keep people from being turned into Judases".

EPS



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Colin Winter, exiled Anglican bishop of Namibia, died of a heart attack 17 November at his London home. He was 53 and an outspoken opponent of apartheid, the race separation system of South Africa, which continues to administer Namibia despite the withdrawal of United Nations permission for that. South Africa expelled him and two other church workers in 1972.

Charles Parlin, 83, one of the six World Council of Churches co-presidents from 1961-1968 is dead. A senior partner with the law firm of Shearman & Sterling, New York City, he was also very active in USA and international Methodist organizations and activities.

Veteran USA ecumenist William Boney died of cancer at the end of October. A Presbyterian, he was appointed in September 1980 to head the faith and order commission of the [USA] National Council of Churches. A theology professor for 17 years before that, he was also active in the 10-denomination Consultation on Church Union.

A Jewish and two Christian leaders have joined in a statement urging more openness to refugees seeking asylum in the USA, especially those from Haiti and El Salvador. The appeal was signed by General Secretaries Claire Randall, National Council of Churches [USA]; Thomas Kelly, U.S. Catholic Conference; and Bernard Mandelbaum, Synagogue Council of America [Related stories: EPS No.29, page 1, and EPS No.27, page 9].

Two computer specialists and a Bible scholar at Technion Institute of Technology in Haifa have concluded that the book of Genesis was the work of one author, not at least two as current biblical scholarship generally suggests. On the other hand, their computer analysis of language in the book of Isaiah suggests multiple authorship for it.

At their annual meeting, a committee of USA Lutheran and Roman Catholic bishops urged "parish and regional groups" of the two traditions to jointly celebrate the 800th anniversary of the birth of Francis of Assisi during the coming year.

This year is being marked as a 1000th anniversary of Icelandic Christianity. Although the Althing, the Icelandic parliament, decided in 1000 that the Nordic island should be Christian, this year marks the millennium of the arrival of a German bishop and an expatriate Icelander (Thorvaldur the Far Traveler) to preach the gospel.

The synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony has voted support for petitions by young church people urging an alternative to military service in East Germany (GDR). The synod also considered several recent cases of rebaptism. A church report says that "whoever denies the validity of baptism received as a child, questions his belonging to our church".

The 25th annual conference of the United Christian Council in Israel was scheduled for 3-5 November, at the Church of Scotland Centre, Tiberias. The UCCI associates 20 small Christian bodies in the country.

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The general synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands has urged greater restraint in the Christian use of "Yahweh", a form of the name of God in the Hebrew Scriptures for which Jews have traditionally substituted the title "Lord".

The National Centre for Christian Communities and Networks has been formed in Birmingham (England) UK to "support groups, communities and networks involved in pioneering new forms of Christian community, witness and action" in "down-to-earth, vigorous ways, relevant to the needs of the modern world".

Clamor, publication of the commission for human rights and the marginalized of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Sao Paulo, Brazil, is one of 31 recipients of this year's Vladimir Herzog Prize. Sponsored by several Brazilian journalistic and other organizations, the prize honours a journalist who died while in Sao Paulo police custody five years ago, amidst charges he was tortured. The awards are given for work in defence of human rights. Clamor's issues on prison conditions of political detainees and 163 children who have disappeared for political reasons in Uruguay, Argentine, Chile, and Paraguay, were cited in making the award.

The head of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland has warned against three societal trends - religious cults and other pseudo-religious movements, a rejection of science, and religious fundamentalism allied with political conservatism. Archbishop Mikko Juva outlined his views at a meeting of church workers in his diocese.

The [USA] Institute of Religion and Freedom has launched a campaign calling for a new look at links between Christian values and democratic government. It says it seeks to transcend a "pestilence of politicizing" in USA churches between approaches which are "obsessively anti-communist" and others which are "apologists for oppression". Institute leaders put various activities of the "new religious right" in the first category, and others of groups such as the World and National [USA] Councils of Churches and Lutheran World Federation in the second. A United Methodist-financed study of the institute links it with the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, a grouping of "neoconservative" Democrats. Institute leaders deny any "organic connection" between it and the coalition.

A recent poll reports 55 percent of Finnish comprehensive and vocational schoolchildren say they believe in God; 30 percent don't know. The rest say God doesn't exist (six percent) or "hardly exists" (eight percent).

An association has been formed to support the work of Casa Locarno, founded in 1947 by the World Council of Churches and HEKS, relief agency of the Swiss Protestant Federation. The Casa Locarno Association includes 26 other churches, ecumenical councils, and church agencies from 11 European countries and the USA, among them the Conference of European Churches and the European Baptist Federation. Casa Locarno promotes encounters between European church workers. Each year, 350-400 of them spend a month there.



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Tanjug, the Yugoslav news agency, reports the jailing for 8 and 5 1/2 years of two Roman Catholic priests on charges of anti-state activities. The two are editor-in-chief and secretary of a church magazine published in the central Yugoslav town of Mostar. Yugoslav authorities have charged some Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox clergy with encouraging ethnic nationalism in this federal country.

A religious service at Saboba, north Ghana, brought together both Christians and Muslims to pray for peace and unity among those engaged in a recent tribal war in the area. The Christians included Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and members of the Assembly of God.

Three cabinet members and two senior chiefs have been appointed by the Lesotho government for a dialogue on peace and cooperation in the country following a request from the Christian Council of Lesotho. Prominent government opponents and church leaders have been murdered and kidnapped in recent months. [EPS No.25, page 8; EPS No.27, page 6; and EPS No.30, page 5].

A 21-page exhortation on "Justice and Evangelization in Africa" was recently released by the continent's Roman Catholic bishops following their meeting earlier this year [29 June - 5 July] in Yaounde, Cameroon.

The organizations which group the regional Lutheran churches in East and West Germany have each elected a new presiding bishop. Karlheinz Stoll, bishop of the Northelbian Evangelical Lutheran Church, was chosen by the synod of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in [West] Germany. Johannes Hempel, bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony, was elected by the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in the German Democratic Republic.

The president of the Zimbabwe National Traditional Healers' Association says churches in that country, especially the Roman Catholic, are "new enemies" of his association and that they fear loss of church membership and income from those attracted to traditional medical practices. The Roman Catholic bishops' conference denied any church effort to discredit the association or any "true and genuine medicine".

The secretary of the West German Bible Society says sales of the latest translation of the "Luther Bible" have slumped greatly this year and last. Siegfried Meurer adds that the 1975 revision of the New Testament has met with heavy criticism and even outright rejection from a majority of the Reformed, Lutheran, and United regional churches in the country.

The [Anglican] Church of England has set apart women as deaconesses since 1862. By action of its general synod this month, legislation is to be prepared abolishing the distinction between deaconesses and deacons - one of the three orders of ordained ministry (with priests and bishops) in Anglicanism. A 1977 general synod meeting declined a proposal to abolish the male diaconate, which in recent years in the English church has functioned mostly as a period of apprentice priesthood, rather than as a distinctive long-term ministry.

## ECUVIEW : Angola - Impressions and Observations\*

Angola is a country rich in minerals, with vast areas of fertile soil which can, under normal conditions, easily provide enough food for its population. It is sad to see that internal unrest and the influence of foreign powers have led to a state of the economy which cannot provide the basic necessities of life for its people.

While Angola is said to earn US\$ 320 million per year from its oil revenues, it has to spend vast amounts on a military machinery to fight outside and internal enemies, especially with the help of Cuba...

The government places national unity above tribal and ethnic loyalties. In our conversations with officials we were impressed by their dedication and competence, and their firm intentions to overcome the country's difficulties. But they admit to a great lack of qualified personnel and inefficiency, which soon becomes obvious to the visitor when trying to make travel or hotel arrangements.

During our visit to Lubango, capital of the southern province of Huila, we were in contact with several churches which belong to the Association of Evangelicals in Angola (AEA). It is impressive to see how churches everywhere in this country are thriving and growing. On Sundays, the churches are full, most of them have several choirs, and often people are standing outside when there is not enough room inside the church buildings.

Lubango is a garrison city. Soldiers are everywhere, Angolans and Cubans. Military vehicles are roaring through the streets. Even though this lovely city of about 50,000 inhabitants lies more than 200 km north of the Angolan border with Namibia, South Africans have bombed the city twice: in 1979 a furniture factory was bombed and totally destroyed (although allegedly there was a Namibian refugee camp in the vicinity); in summer 1981 a refugee camp outside the city was attacked.

There is fear and insecurity. We had a short but moving encounter with two Irish nuns who had come from Cunene to get medicines, food and other essentials. They were just about to leave with their station wagon back to their mission hospital in Chiula, against the urgent advice of their friends who feared for their lives. The sisters told us of the brutality of the South African army, of their indiscriminate bombings and shooting at everything that moves. The South Africans claim that they are only attacking SWAPO guerrilla targets, but in reality the vast majority of the victims are Angolan civilians.

The sisters left in tears, going back to carry out their mission work, not knowing what will happen to them. They knew that the red cross they had painted on their car was no guarantee for safety, as sad experiences have proven...

SWAPO president Sam Nujoma told us that South Africa has 50,000 soldiers in the area on both sides of the Angolan border. This massive military presence can only be seen as a sign of an intensification of the conflict. He confirmed that in addition to the war situation, there is a serious drought: cattle and wildlife are dying and the people have little or no food. The combination of hunger, repression and displacement is creating an acutely serious situation. Nujoma expressed his gratitude to WCC, LWF and to all churches and agencies which support the Namibian struggle for freedom and independence.

He appealed to WCC and other church organizations for a continuation of urgently needed assistance in the form of food and other basic goods. (He mentioned maize, beans, rice, oil and soap). Nujoma made it clear that SWAPO is ready to sign a cease-fire agreement, to implement UN resolution 435, and to have UN-controlled, free elections. The SWAPO president said that the war will intensify if no political settlement can be negotiated. He expressed hope that the West will exert pressure so that "South Africa can be brought to its senses".

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\* This is excerpted from a report on a visit to Angola 16-31 October. It was prepared by Helmut Reuschle, material aid secretary of the World Council of Churches interchurch aid commission, in cooperation with Leopoldo Niilus, former director of the WCC international affairs commission. [Related story, this EPS, page 5].



ECUTEXT: Suggestions for Hindu-Christian Dialogue\*

We know, however, that until and unless dialogue takes place at the grassroots level in every district and town it will not generate the understanding and cooperation we need to work with our neighbours for a just society. Our primary goal must be for Christians and Hindus to take the initiative to plan for dialogue at the local level. At a regional and local level, dialogue may take many forms:

Talking together. We need to discuss with one another the problems we share in common in our communities: the oppression of harijans [untouchables]; the corruption of institutions of justice; the outbreaks of violence between castes or religious groups; the suffering and exploitation of many women.

Working together. One of the most profitable and powerful forms of dialogue is working together with our neighbours in concrete projects of social action. This might mean joining together in flood relief projects or joining together to call the community's attention to victims of violence or injustice. At a more ambitious level, this might mean joining together to establish those hospitals, educational projects, and social agencies which Hindu and Christian groups have hitherto established separately. Working together in intentionally undertaken joint projects, large or small, will also mean reflecting upon our work together. Such active and socially - conscious dialogue may especially serve to attract the energies and engage the commitments of young people who have drifted away from their religious traditions.

Living together. We hear how Hindus and Christians live together in cities, towns and villages not only in India, but in Indonesia, South Africa, Kenya, Trinidad, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and many other countries. However, living together should not be merely an accident of geography which places us in proximity to but not in relation to our neighbours. Our living together should be intentional - that we intend to create a community in which we all participate. One way we might begin to develop that awareness and appreciation of our neighbours is to undertake retreats together. For example, Hindu and Christian doctors, or teachers, or social workers, might spend a weekend or a week living together at a conference or retreat centre discussing their professional work in relation to their religious commitments.

Celebrating together. On national or regional holidays, Hindus and Christians might join together in their programmes and celebrations. During appropriate religious festivals, Hindus and Christians might invite one another to visit, taking advantage of these occasions to become educated about and appreciative of the traditions of the other. On a more daily level, Hindus and Christians might arrange for mutual visits in temples, churches, ashrams, and homes. In all these cases, Christians and Hindus should prepare for such visits through programmes of education and reflect on such visits in discussion.

Openness to each other's worship and meditation. In some situations it is not only possible, but profitable and even necessary, for Hindus and Christians to sit together in worship and meditation. In our morning worship at Rajpur, which was entirely voluntary, the first half was led by a Hindu and the second half led by a Christian ... We deepened our understanding and sense of community by sitting together while we worshipped, each in our own way, and by finding aspects of our worship and meditation which we could indeed share in common.

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\* This text is excerpted from a report from an international Hindu-Christian meeting  
30 May - 6 June 1981 under World Council of Churches auspices in Rajpur, India.

# EPS

## Ecumenical Press Service

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THE NEXT EPS WILL APPEAR ON 18 DECEMBER 1981

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CHURCH DISARMAMENT PANEL:  
GLOOM, BUT 'SIGNS OF HOPE'

Amsterdam (EPS) - A 17-member international church panel has rejected "nuclear deterrence.. [as] a stable or acceptable basis to peace". It calls the "increasing popular resistance to nuclear weapons in many countries" among "signs of hope" in an otherwise "gloomy" picture.

The group was convened by the Geneva-based World Council of Churches. Its preliminary report also urges churches to "speak and act now, even at the risk of some oversimplification, because the peril is so great". The panel, from 15 countries, heard four days of testimony [23-26 November] from three dozen witnesses.

The group calls nuclear weapons "a new and dangerous development in the long history of belligerence which must itself be challenged as no longer acceptable in a world redeemed by Christ. Even national structures need ultimately to be put in question by churches which declare the unity of mankind".

Asked during a news conference whether the panel concluded that nuclear weapons invalidate a traditional view that wars in certain situations might be justified, Paulos Gregorios, Orthodox Church of the East Metropolitan of New Delhi, said the group was not of one mind about the continuing usefulness of just-war theology.

Rejecting any strategy which implies or advocates nuclear war fighting, the panel also calls "the doctrine of limited war... a new stimulus to the dangers". It supports the continuation of several varieties of arms control negotiations, but says "such negotiations by themselves are not likely to lead to the substantial reductions in nuclear weapons, and their eventual abolition, which we believe are the only proper goals".

The panel observes that some witnesses "gave the impression of being trapped in a system where ultimate responsibility is hard to define... The churches may have a useful role in broadening these frameworks and bringing those involved into dialogue with one another".

The report urges "churches and Christian individuals, where appropriate, to play a responsible part within" various movements opposed to nuclear arms.

Several proposals presented and discussed by the witnesses and panel are described as "signs of hope", including "new international negotiating procedures", a "freeze on the testing, development and production of all nuclear weapons", "limited unilateral disarmament initiatives", and "nuclear weapon-free zones in different parts of the world".

The panel says "churches should urgently consider ... the delegitimization of the production, possession and use of nuclear weapons as a crime against humanity" and should "give the highest priority to confidence building measures between nations and peoples and develop effective pastoral measures to overcome the widespread cynicism, despair and indifference, and expose the selfish nationalistic thinking often disguised as realism..."

NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONDEMNED  
AT WORLD COUNCIL HEARING

Amsterdam (EPS) - An international church hearing on nuclear disarmament began with absolute condemnations of nuclear weapons on moral grounds.

"Christians have to say it is a sin not only to use, not only threaten to use, but merely to build a nuclear weapon", said William Sloane Coffin, senior minister of Riverside Church, New York. He was a preacher at the opening worship service.

The Geneva-based World Council of Churches sponsored the [22-27 November] hearing at the Free University. WCC General Secretary Philip Potter told participants that "there is no moral justification for the development of nuclear weapons. Indeed, there is an unequivocal moral obligation on Christians not to make or to use nuclear weapons".

Three dozen witnesses -- theologians, politicians, diplomats, peace activists, scientists, and others -- were questioned by a 17-member panel during the week. Hearing group moderator John Habgood, [Anglican] Church of England bishop of Durham, said the gathering was "not a teach-in, nor a demonstration", and was meant to "expose ... many points of view". It convened in the wake of several large anti-nuclear demonstrations in various world capitals, and just before the opening of USA-USSR disarmament negotiations in Geneva.

Impetus for the hearing included a 1975 resolution of the WCC world assembly and a 1980 resolution of its central committee. Habgood said the timing of the hearing was "not just a response to what has been happening in the last few months". He warned against twin dangers of "passing too quickly from deep theological truths to ill considered political programs" on the one hand, and "becoming so immersed in technical complexities and political subtleties that no fresh insight is brought to the subject in hand" on the other.

Potter said he hoped the hearing could "reinforce the determination of leaders and people around the world to achieve a halt to the mad accumulation of these murderous and suicidal weapons". He noted that churches and others concerned about disarmament are "far from clear or united" about how to translate "moral conviction into feasible and effective political action.

Coffin called "the building and owning of nuclear weapons... an abomination... comparable to the buying and owning of slaves". He said the two superpowers should demonstrate not just "willingness... to negotiate" but also "readiness to disarm" by taking some unilateral actions. "Given the devastating fire power that would remain, neither nation would be threatening its security", he suggested.

EPS



CHURCH CONSULTATION HELD ON  
TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

Bad Boll, West Germany (EPS) - The rise of transnational corporations (TNCs) is among the prominent features of the latter 20th century. With global operations, their power and influence extend far beyond countries where TNC international headquarters are located.

Six years ago, the assembly of the World Council of Churches called for a major study of the phenomenon of TNCs. The culmination of that study came here at a weeklong international consultation on TNCs and the mission of the churches [23-28 November].

Among those addressing the approximately 80 participants was Reginald Green, a professional fellow of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, UK. He said it is too easy to blame TNCs for all the world's problems. Green referred to their ambiguity, their ability to adapt to changes. He also noted a marked centralization at TNC decision-making levels and a rigid hierarchy.

The economist cautioned against trying either to eliminate TNCs or to convert them into institutions with goals and aims especially related to questions of social and economic justice. Their own internal logic, Green said, makes TNCs insensitive to such questions, which they gladly leave to civil governments. Green's presentation raised the accountability question: Who/what holds, can hold, or should hold TNCs responsible for their actions?

Philippe de Weck, president of the International Christian Union of Business Executives and a member of several corporate boards, told the group that the call for TNCs to be socially responsible is relatively new. He said it is good for pressure for social responsibility to be put on TNCs, but urged more time for them to adapt to this new social expectation.

The plea for time was unacceptable to several present from the Third World and elsewhere. Several regional reports underscored adverse political and economic consequences of TNC activities.

In a presentation on "the mystique of transnational business and the vision of a just society", Franz Hinkelammert, an economist and theologian on the staff of the National Autonomous University of Honduras and the Ecumenical Research Department of Costa Rica, critiqued contemporary capitalism as reflected in the work of economist Milton Friedmann and others of the "Chicago school".

"The principle on which capitalist society functions -- maximization of profits on free markets -- precludes recognition of man as an active subject, and hence, of the human person", Hinkelammert said. In contrast, the basic principle of social and economic organization in a society concerned to establish social justice "should be the inalienable right of every individual to be integrated into society through his work and to be able to satisfy his needs by means of his labour", he suggested.

Following these and other presentations, participants spent the rest of the week formulating and extensively debating a report and recommendations, including five areas: transnationality of business and the ecumenical movement; power, accountability, and social responsibility; technology, employment and organized labour; "discerning mechanisms of oppression and building counter-vailing powers"; and ethics and the prophetic role of the churches regarding TNCs. After further review and discussion, the group's findings are to be released for consideration by the next meeting of the WCC central committee, in July.

UNITED CHURCHES URGED  
TO EXPAND THEIR VISION

Colombo, Sri Lanka (EPS) - United and uniting churches -- denominations formed by bringing together Christians from more than one tradition -- were challenged to expand their vision of what a united church can be at their fourth world consultation, here [18-25 November].

The appeals came from the two main speakers -- Moderator Martin Cressey of the United Reformed Church in the United Kingdom and Kurunagala Diocese Bishop Luckshman Wickremesinghe of the [Anglican] Church of Ceylon.

Merger of the bishop's denomination with the Church of South India in Sri Lanka, and Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists on the island has been delayed for several years by various civil actions.

Cressy spoke on "church union and the visible unity of Christ's Church", including a discussion of "broader catholicity of faith" in united churches and "church union as a sign to the churches".

Wickremesinghe spoke on "church union and the renewal of human community", including such questions as to whether union means more effective mission, and how social, political, cultural and linguistic divisions may prevent the realization of "unity after union".

In their report on the meeting the 53 delegates from 17 united churches and 12 negotiating committees, cite a need to "encompass... also the Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic church and the diverse life of charismatic and pentecostal witness". They also call for a reciprocal openness from those traditions, not generally involved to date in church union efforts.

The report calls "covenanting, integrative federations, joint councils of churches which are in full eucharistic fellowship... clearly valuable in their particular contexts". But, it adds, they "must not be seen as substitutes for the richness of fellowship that still eludes us.

The group says united churches do not want to form a separate confessional family or organization, but it encouraged them to develop closer relationships among themselves based on a mutual sharing of all resources, including forms of worship and approaches to mission. Its report also covers such questions as education for ecumenism at the local level, relationships between united churches and Christian world communions, and the way in which a united church shapes its identity through mission and encounter with its cultural setting.

Efforts to unite Christians of more than one tradition are currently in various stages of development in Argentina/Uruguay, Burma, Cameroon, Canada, USA, UK (England, Scotland, Wales), Ireland, Ghana, India, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Sierre Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania.

United churches are found in Belgium, Canada, Hong Kong, United Kingdom, Jamaica and Grand Cayman, Japan, Madagascar, India, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, Philippines, USA, Zaire, Zambia, Australia, East and West Germany, Thailand, and Bangladesh.

Previous such consultations were held in 1967, 1970, and 1975. Like this one, they were convened by the faith and order secretariat of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches.



UK CHURCHES ASSEMBLY ACTS  
ON IRELAND, ALCOHOL, PEACE

London (EPS) - At its autumn assembly, here [23-25 November], the British Council of Churches tackled a wide range of issues, including the women's movement, Ireland, urban rioting in British cities, alcohol abuse, and peace and disarmament.

The assembly urged BCC member churches to dialogue directly with women's groups. It said British and Irish Christians "have much both to learn from and to contribute to" such movements.

Debating Ireland for the first time since 1975, the assembly endorsed a statement issued the week before by the executive committee of the Irish Council of Churches stressing that there is no justification for violence or acts of retaliation of any kind. The BCC added a condemnation of "all actions of any kind which place sections of the population, whether majority or minority, in fear of their lives".

The assembly also adopted a long resolution which, among other things, stressed the need for any discussion of the future of Northern Ireland to be an open matter involving the people of Northern Ireland at all stages. It also called for a continuation and strengthening of full cooperation between the London and Dublin governments to eliminate violence and terrorism.

During the debate it was said that the rigidity shown by the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy over mixed marriages is felt by Protestants to be "the most hurtful and divisive issue" in Irish ecumenism.

During discussions of what the agenda called "disturbances in our streets" the assembly was told by a Roman Catholic nun with 14 years' experience of community and pastoral work in Liverpool that the lesson of this summer's rioting in British cities is that the church cannot sit on the fence. "As a Christian I've learned this summer that Christians must take sides, and that side must be that of the suffering and the poor", said Mary McAleese of the Parish Mission Sisters. "This will quite often mean being unpopular with one's fellow Christians".

On the growing problem of alcohol abuse, the BCC, while recognizing that a primary need is a change in social attitudes towards drinking, called on the British government to consider introducing a series of stringent measures to control and reduce the consumption of alcohol.

The assembly also decided to convene a consultation to consider how Christians of different theological and political views could work together for the effective promotion of peace, and what structures would be needed for this. This consultation is projected for early next March.

- Robert Nowell \*

\*Nowell is an EPS correspondent.

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Ethiopian Lutheran church editor Duro Burje, 29, was arrested when he attempted to photograph the government takeover of the Addis Ababa headquarters of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, [See EPS No.32, page 1]. In West Germany, Christian Krause, missions secretary for the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, an EECMNY partner church, said the situation of the Ethiopian church is very critical.

The Reformed Church in Hungary has established a program to prevent and combat alcoholism and assist alcoholics and their families. The effort is part of a national campaign against chronic overdrinking.

A three-day international Christian-Muslim symposium was held in Rome [17-19 November] on monotheism (belief in one God). About 50 scholars gathered under the auspices of the International Progress Organization. Representatives from the Vatican and the World Council of Churches were among those present.

USA assistant defence secretary Richard Perle said in a Los Angeles Times interview that "Protestant angst" is a major factor in the European anti-war movement. He also suggested that European church leaders are exploiting fear of nuclear war in order to reverse a decline in organized religion. (Angst is a gloomy, sometimes neurotic, feeling of anxiety or depression).

The moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has strongly criticized statements and tactics of independent Presbyterian minister Ian Paisley, who recently urged his followers to kill members of the Irish Republican Army out to kill Protestants. Said John Girvan, "Murder is murder from whatever source it comes, and I will encourage our people not to be led by anyone along that road at all". Paisley said in reply that "to judiciously murder the murderers is the only way to rid us of terrorists, and... it is God's law". Paisley's Free Presbyterian Church has about 20,000 members; the PCI about 450,000. The Irish Council of Churches executive committee also issued a statement in connection with Paisley's activities saying "there is no justification for violence or acts of retaliation of any kind in our society. The situation demands the full support of the whole community for the police and security forces."

Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Free Church leaders in England have praised a recent report on last summer's urban riots which calls for urgent action to combat disadvantages based on race. A joint statement on the report was issued by Robert Runcie, Basil Hume, and Morris West, respectively the [Anglican] archbishop of Canterbury, the [Roman Catholic] archbishop of Westminster, and the moderator of the Free Church Federal Council.

The attempted overthrow of the Seychelles government has put the Far East Broadcasting Association station in the Indian Ocean nation off the air, at least temporarily, at the request of the government. It has been broadcasting daily in 21 languages to India, the Middle East, and Africa.



CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 1981

by Dr Philip A. Potter  
General Secretary, World Council of Churches

"Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good news of great joy which will come to all the people" (Luke 2:10). Thus was announced the birth of the Saviour, Christ the Lord.

This message is quite the contrary to the daily bad news we hear, in our fear-ridden world, of the cries of pain of millions without food, without home, without a chance to live and be themselves, without hope. The news is that the creative powers of human beings are devoted to weapons of torture, destruction and death which now threaten the very survival of the human race. The news is that human skill is used to exploit the resources of the earth for the benefit of those who have at the expense of those who have not. The news is that in our world of consumption and propaganda, people are encouraged to seek their own fleeting pleasures in prostitution of themselves and others, and live in grim mistrust of one another.

This Christmastide we remember afresh that God's news for us is good and it is one of great joy for all the people. Joy (chara) is the effect and expression of grace (charis), the self-giving love of God. It is God who created the universe, our planet earth, and humanity as male and female for good. It is God who, as the Psalmist says, makes us glad with the joy of his presence, because his purpose for us is that we be made free by his love to have life in all its fullness and to share it with others. It is God who in a divided world of Jew and Greek, free and slave, male and female, rich and poor, gave himself in Christ that we may have the joy of life together in integrity and community. It is God who sends the Spirit to bring the fruit of love, joy and peace in our hearts and through us to others. Joy is the very nature of God, ever communicating who he is to all. Joy is God's gift which enables us to be fully what we are created to be, and to communicate it to each other.

But joy, like grace, is not cheap or easy. The very coming of Christ was through the birth-pangs of a woman, Mary, who was full of grace, self-giving love. Motherhood is the very symbol of joy -- the bringing to birth through pain and travail of something new for the life of the world. That is why mystics have called Jesus our mother who gave himself in caring, suffering love for us that we may have life and joy. Indeed, there is no joy without suffering. And suffering is the struggle with the fractured realities of our lives and of our world in order to be united with God's will of peace, wholeness, for all.

The joy which came at Christmas is our calling today. We bring the good news that we were not made to live in fear and mistrust of one another, to confront and threaten one another, to be twisted and broken in ourselves and in our relations, to deprive one another of life, or to become merchants of death.

We rejoice that there are those who give themselves in the service of others, even to the point of imprisonment, torture, and death. We rejoice that there are millions who refuse to accept that we must preserve our selfish security by preparing for collective suicide. We rejoice that there are those who turn their sufferings and disabilities into means of witnessing to the grace of life. All these are bearers of joy to the world. And they do so because, whether they acknowledge it or not, the Christ has come. May Christ come to us this Christmastide bringing joy to our hearts and lives that we may celebrate this joy and be a joy to others, that the world may know and practice self-giving love and have the peace which embraces all. Therefore, let us rejoice in our incarnate and risen Lord now and always.

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## ECUTEXT : Message From European Church Leaders\*

...We call upon all Christians in Europe to gather together, with growing confidence, in joint prayer, witness and service so that we can be strengthened in our common hope and be completely open to the Gospel which gives meaning to our life.

We are summoned to fellowship in the hope which is founded upon the triune God...

Every one of us must become permeated anew by this common hope. For our credibility as witnesses to this hope is today put to an inexorable test in view of our continuing divisions, in face of the acute threat to life and peace in the world and the growth of fear and resignation.

As we here in Løgumkloster remembered the sixteen hundredth anniversary of our commonly held Creed of the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople, we felt our divisions, particularly at the Lord's table, to be a painful contradiction to it. We confess in humility before God and one another our shared responsibility for the great gulf that still exists between our confession of unity and our ability to live in that unity.

Many serious injustices which are the result of sin have been stamped upon the world and are a constant and dangerous source of conflicts. The poverty, hunger and misery of millions of people, especially in the Third World, stand in unbearable contradiction over against the prosperity of the European countries. In our continent, too, such conditions remain undiminished. New weapon systems of unconceivable annihilating power are continually being set up. We cannot allow ourselves to remain silent when the world - and not least our continent - could become the theatre and starting point for a totally destructive war and when international cooperation for securing peace is seriously threatened.

This menace, the uncertainties of the future and the problems of growing unemployment in some countries of Europe, fill people with fear and induce bitterness and resignation. Discouragement and indifference are spreading.

We shared with our members from Ireland in the distress of the situation there and the misunderstanding of it so commonly entertained in many lands. We applaud the courage shown by so many Irish clergy and church members who speak and work for peace and reconciliation in the face of violence. We pledge ourselves to renewed solidarity and prayer with them in their call to Christian hope.

In this world, we are called to hope against all hopelessness. Let us together testify to this hope through confident prayer for each other and for the world, through a bold confession of the Gospel of reconciliation and through selfless service for all humankind, particularly the disadvantaged, the oppressed and the weak...

God will grant us the final fulfilment of his promises at last when he establishes his Kingdom. Yet even now in this still imperfect world we should demonstrate our hope in God's future through acts of righteousness, love and brotherhood.

This is particularly so in the case of confessional and ethnic minorities, migrant workers and other social groups who are in need. Young people in their longing for a better world should have our trust and our understanding, so that they may be strengthened in faith for the future.

When churches and Christians have relations of fellowship with one another across national boundaries, sharing their joys and sorrows, and are prepared to lead a simple life, this can be a sign of hope for many people.

As churches and as Christians in Europe, we must commit ourselves to an order of peace in our world in which all humanity and all peoples can live in freedom, justice and mutual respect.

In view of the impending danger, the churches of Europe must commit themselves to work for the building of confidence and the peaceful resolution of present tensions. Discussions between the super-powers leading to an end of the arms race on all sides are an urgent necessity...

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\*This is excerpted from a message issued by approximately 80 bishops and other Christian leaders from almost all European countries. They met in Løgumkloster, Denmark, [16-20 November] for the second such "ecumenical encounter" co-sponsored by the Conference of European Churches and the Council of European Roman Catholic Bishops' Conferences. Its theme was "Called to One Hope - Ecumenical Fellowship in Prayer, Witness, and Service". The agenda included two hours of daily prayer and meditation and a daily celebration of the eucharist.



# photo oikoumene

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No 33







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## ANGOLA

[See story on the new church aid appeal for US\$1.3 million for Angola, whose life is disrupted by drought and South African military actions; EPS No.32, page 5].

(2716) 35,000 Namibian refugees live in this camp in Kwanza-Sul.

(2717) A government sign near a parish church in Lubango reads: "Firm in the defence of our threatened nation; forward in the general offensive against liberalism and disorganization".

(2718) Choir in a Baptist church in Luanda.

(2719-20) Followers of the Prophet Simon Kimbangu have formed an African Independent church. In Luanda, a church theatre group presents the story of his life on the 30th anniversary of his death. A church band plays during worship.

(2721) At the top of this Portuguese-built road from Lubango to Mocamedes is a point at which a 1979 South African helicopter attack on vehicles killed 15 people.

(2722) The Kwanza-Sul Namibian refugee camp has a meagre hospital.

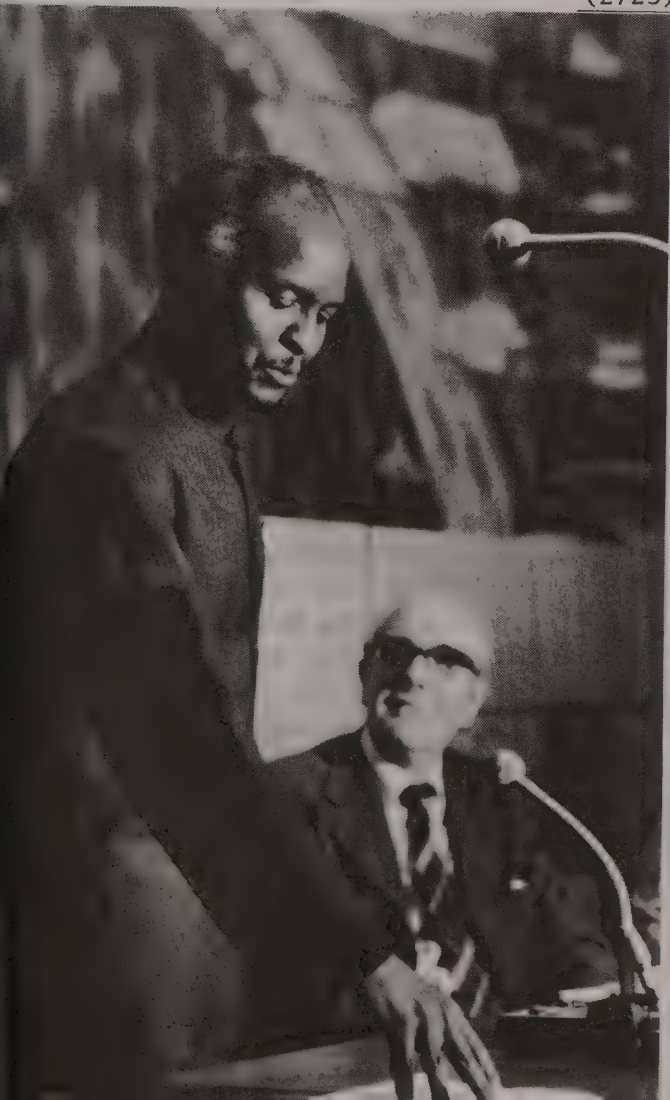
## ZIMBABWE

[See story on the visit of President Canaan Banana to the Ecumenical Centre in Geneva; EPS No.31, page 2]

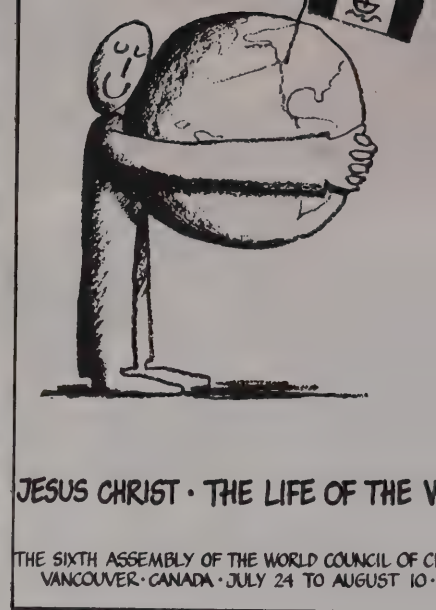
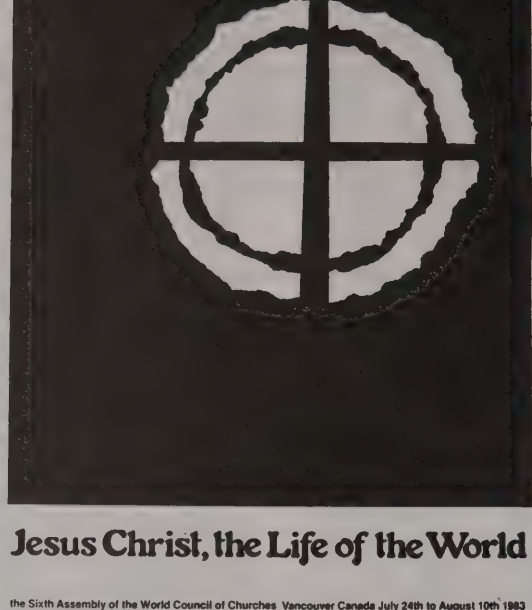
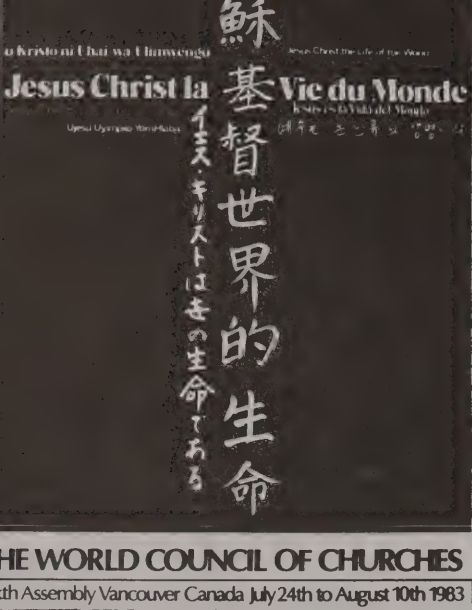
(2723) President Canaan Banana addresses staff at the Ecumenical Centre. World Council of Churches assistant general secretary Wesley Kenworthy looks on.

## ZAMBIA

(cover) A refugee boy at the Meheba settlement sails his boat on an artificial lake also used for irrigation and fishing. (2721)







**ASSEMBLY POSTERS:**

Three posters have received awards in a contest in advance of the next assembly of the World Council of Churches. First prize went to a work by a Canadian, Heather Dau. The circles around the cross are a rainbow of colour. Another Dau work (left) shared second prize with that of Neils Wamberg, a Dane. [See EPS No.31, page 5]. Theme of the assembly, 24 July - 10 August 1983, is "Jesus Christ, the Life of the World".



**"25 OCTOBER"**

Brazilian journalist Vladimir Herzog died in Sao Paulo police custody five years ago. This year, journalistic and other organizations gave 31 awards in his honour to efforts to defend human rights. Copies of this work by Elifas Andreato, 25 October, depicting Herzog's death from torture, were presented to the winners, which included Clamor, publication of a commission of the Roman Catholic archdiocese of Sao Paulo. [See EPS No.32, page 7].





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CONSULTATION CONSIDERS  
CHURCH AND THE DISABLED

San Bernardo, Sao Paulo, Brazil (EPS) - The church has enormous potential to champion the rights of disabled people and to support them spiritually. But to do that, it must free itself from the paternalism and prejudice it shares with the rest of society.

That message came from an international ecumenical Consultation on the Humanity and Wholeness of Persons with Disabilities, here [23-30 November]. Organized mainly by disabled volunteers, the majority of its 52 participants -- from 15 countries in Latin America, North America, the Caribbean, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia -- are physically disabled. Also attending were ministers, psychiatrists, educationists working with mentally retarded children, and relatives of disabled people.

The meeting was sponsored by the World Council of Churches family education office, whose executive secretary, Masamba ma Mpolo, said "health is not dependent on the beauty, the strength and the weakness of one's physical body, but on the fundamental recognition and acceptance of the reality of creation". The Latin American Council of Churches and the 156-group Brazil section of the Christian Fraternity of Sick and Disabled People were also involved in the consultation.

In many countries, the church pioneered organizations for the welfare of the mentally and physically disabled. Nowadays, as feed back from participants showed, there is a growing number of imaginative church-sponsored projects around the world helping disabled people secure education and employment as integrated members of society.

Nevertheless, said Uniting Church in Australia minister John Howard, "the history of the church and disability has not always been a happy one". A paraplegic, Howard said views of disability as a punishment for sin or as a test of faith must go. Rather, he said, like Jesus, the church must "listen to the disabled and... share her life with disabled persons".

Mentally retarded people, the consultation suggested, are in many ways the most "hidden" and most in need. Retarded children, especially, tend to be either over protected or abandoned by parents who in their turn suffer terrible strain and isolation, even in countries where more material resources are available. Participants agreed that personal prejudices, lack of access to public places and facilities, and lack of government and even church resources to help them live as independently as possible, are still major problems.

The consultation also focused on the urgency of preventing and fighting the poverty and repression that cause many disabilities. A Chilean psychiatrist working to rehabilitate torture victims and their families told the meeting: "We have to widen our definition of disability to include those disabled by society". Added a Brazilian priest, "we want disabled people to become conscious of their own worth so that they can fight not only for their rights but join the common struggle with others who are marginalized... the poor, the workers, Indians, blacks and homosexuals..."

- Kathy Lowe\*

\*Lowe is associate editor of the WCC magazine One World.

The recommendations of the consultation appear as an ecutext, page 10. The personal testimony of one consultation participant appears on an ecuvievw, page 10.



WORLD CHURCH GROUP AND  
TURKISH OFFICIALS MEET

Geneva (EPS) - "Some progress" was reportedly made as a result of a weeklong visit by an international church delegation to Turkey. The group met with government officials and leaders of the Orthodox communities which account for most of the country's approximately 100,000 Christians among its 45 million mostly Muslim citizens.

Under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, the group was chaired by André Appel, president of the [Lutheran] Church of Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine and of the Conference of European Churches. It spent the week in Turkey "frankly" discussing "concerns of the ecumenical family" regarding Christians in Turkey, according to Ghassan Rubeiz, WCC Middle East secretary, a member of the delegation.

He added that the visit was meant to "open channels of communication with the government". Reports of difficulties for Eastern (Greek) and Oriental (Armenian and Syrian) Orthodox Christians in Turkey have circulated outside the country.

Rubeiz said Turkish government officials explained their view of the "reported anxieties of Christians related to freedom of running educational institutions, religious activities, and questions of human rights".

He said the government offered to study "any project of assistance" the WCC might propose. "Some progress has been made on procedures to follow up the process of dialogue", he added.

Some Christians from Turkey are reluctant to return to their country for fear of government retaliation. Said Rubeiz, "Turkish officials told us that their country is free and this is not a justifiable anxiety". He did observe, however, that in terms of Turkish social structure and economic conditions, Christians on average are at some disadvantage.

EPS

BIG ROLE FOR LITTLE  
COUNTRIES PROPOSED

Amsterdam (EPS) - Smaller nations could play an important role in encouraging alternatives to the current international superpower arrangements.

So suggested a meeting here of 35 representatives from church-related efforts in development education and funding in 15 North American, European, and Australasian countries. It was convened by the development commission of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches.

The group urged churches and related groups to work towards what a summary of the meeting describes as a "small nations policy that could advocate more freely yet forcefully measures towards détente and peace, and towards international justice".

The group also suggested a collection of "stories of concrete efforts of groups and movements that propose alternatives in the fields of food, energy, technology and others" in order to produce a "people's ... report... based on the hopes and aspirations of the poor and marginalized for a better, more humane life for all".

EPS

UN PASSES RELIGIOUS  
FREEDOM DECLARATION

United Nations, New York (EPS) - The UN General Assembly has adopted a declaration on the elimination of religious intolerance, which has been discussed for two decades.

The action creates no legal rights or obligations, but does set forth a series of fundamental principles. The declaration says "freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others".

Others of the declaration's eight articles say that "no one shall be subject to discrimination by any state, institution, group of persons or person on grounds of religion or other beliefs" and that "all states shall take effective measures to prevent and eliminate [such] discrimination..."

Article V says parents "have the right to organize the life within the family in accordance with their religion or belief". It adds that "the practices of a religion or beliefs in which a child is brought up must not be injurious to his physical or mental health or to his full development", noting state powers to legislate in this regard.

The declaration lists nine "freedoms" related to the "freedom of thought, conscience, religion, or belief" and also subject to state power to legislate to "protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others".

EPS

POLISH RC PRIMATE  
APPEALS FOR CALM

Warsaw (EPS) - In the wake of the declaration of military rule in Poland, the primate of the Polish Roman Catholic church, Jozef Glemp, has appealed for calm to avoid the shedding of Polish blood. Glemp's appeal came in a sermon broadcast by the state radio.

In the days before imposition of martial law, the archbishop had warned that there could be a tragic social explosion if the Sejm (the Polish parliament) approved proposed emergency laws making it legal to ban strikes.

The archbishop also sent letters to Wojciech Jaruzelski and Lech Walesa, respectively the party and union leaders, calling on them to renew their efforts to reach agreements on issues dividing their two organizations.

There are an estimated 30 million Roman Catholics in Poland, most of the population. The church has played a notable role in mediating party-union disagreement since Solidarity's formation in August 1980.

Earlier, Andrzej Wojtowicz, press officer of the Polish ecumenical council, which groups denominations including most of the country's other 700,000 Christians, said they support the Roman Catholic leadership's mediation efforts "which with all its means is trying to prevent a catastrophe".

EPS



NORWAY CLERGY: NO TO  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS USE

Oslo (EPS) - Two-fifths of the pastors of the [Lutheran] Church of Norway and half the church's bishops have signed a statement calling "the use of nuclear arms... inconsistent with God's will as creator".

A similar statement attracted support from four-fifths (45 of 57) of the country's Methodist clergy. Lutheranism is the chief form of Norwegian Christianity.

The more than 500 Lutheran signers include a wide spectrum of theological traditions and ages in the Norwegian church. "Limited war can be seen as an act of self-defence", they say, "in order to avert something even worse. But, the use of nuclear arms makes this thought absurd, as these weapons wipe out all life over vast areas."

The "prester mot atomvåpen" ("pastors against nuclear arms") statement also urges individual Christians and congregations to renew efforts for disarmament and peace through prayer and other action. It asks the Norway government to press the world's major powers to seriously move toward the goal of halting production of nuclear arms and destroying nuclear arsenals.

EPS

US CHURCH REPS MEET  
ON LANGUAGE, LITURGY

Nashville, Tennessee, USA (EPS) - In some countries and societies, movements for women's equality have drawn attention to questions of language which some consider sexist. That was a major item on the agenda of a three-day language and liturgy consultation, here, sponsored by the 10-denomination Consultation on [US] Church Union.

The 100 consultation participants came from COCU task forces on women and persons with disabling conditions, and its commissions on worship and church order. Other participants included seminary professors, parish pastors, and regional church officials.

United Church of Christ minister Yvonne Delk said concern about language is important because "such discussions are about existence, the right of people to be". She urged church language that is more specific, less obscure, less "trapped, domesticated, exclusive and limited".

Gail Ramshaw Schmidt, a Lutheran liturgical scholar and writer, said the contemporary church is in a "muddle" when it comes to language about God. All human language about God is inadequate, she suggested, with the notion of God as "he" as metaphorical as saying "God is a rock" or "God spoke". And even for persons with loving fathers, she added, "father is an inadequate description of God". Since any pronoun -- he, she, it, they -- used exclusively for God is problematic, she said, it might be better to use different pronouns depending on context, or avoid them altogether.

COCU General Secretary Gerald Moede also warned against other uses of language which may be insensitive. He noted that his daughter, confined to a wheelchair, feels excluded when a worship leader says, "now let us stand and sing". Moede said that as denominations slowly find words to bridge doctrinal divisions, they are becoming aware of other divisions, related to racism, sexism, and disabling conditions.

EPS

CHURCH DISARMAMENT PANEL  
HEARS USA, USSR WITNESSES

Amsterdam (EPS) - In the week before the opening of USA-USSR talks in Geneva on nuclear-weapons reductions in Europe, witnesses from the two superpowers appeared before an international church hearing on nuclear disarmament here. They came not as government representatives, but several are or have been involved in government policy making.

Former US presidential advisor McGeorge Bundy, now history professor at New York University, said it "would be an act of considerable presumption to conclude in any hasty way" that the superpowers nuclear arsenals do not discourage war.

Nonetheless, he said, "minimum deterrence" is sufficient. He said a "properly managed, carefully designed reduction" of half the USA nuclear arsenal, "with or without matching reduction" from the Soviet Union, would leave the USA adequately defended.

Bundy called scenarios which limit nuclear war "inherently implausible". He said it is "to the advantage of all that destabilizing moves" in the "balance of terror" be avoided.

Bundy particularly urged church contributions to discussion about ways to "stop fighting on any terms available at a point where the only alternative appeared to be an all-out war". He also suggested that though conventional forces have a certain "moral ambiguity" support for them in preference to nuclear weapons is desirable.

US Air Force Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft also supported deterrence as "the best vehicle we have found so far" to prevent nuclear war. Paradoxically, he said, "the more usable a weapon is, the greater is its deterrent value", and he judged the control of USA nuclear weapons "far more solid" than 10-15 years ago. That, he said, reduces the risk of war.

Asked about the possibility of a limited nuclear war, Scowcroft said he doesn't "think any of us really knows" what would happen if a nuclear war broke out.

Three witnesses appeared from the Soviet academy of sciences -- A.A. Baev, academician secretary; Alexi Arbatov, chief researcher in its world economy and international relations institute; and Paul Podlesni, section chief of its USA and Canada studies institute. Their presentations dealt with causes of the development and introduction of new nuclear weapons system, current attitude towards the use of nuclear weapons, and prospects for arm control.

Arbatov said the concept of "mutual assured destruction" does not provide for long-term stability. He was critical of proposals for a "limited nuclear option". Both he and Baev said nuclear weapons cannot be used selectively.

Podlesni urged especially that what he cited as the gains of strategic arms limitation talks between the USA and USSR in the 1970s be preserved and built upon. "If we fail", he said, "we face an unlimited arms race".

The consultation was sponsored by the World Council of Churches [Stories: EPS No.33, pages 1 & 2; Related ECUVIEWS: This EPS, page 12].



ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The president of the National Conference of [US Roman] Catholic Bishops has written to the US navy secretary urging that the nuclear submarine named after the Texas city of Corpus Christi (Latin for "body of Christ") be called something else. John Roach said "the naming of a war vessel in this manner is not merely inappropriate but very nearly sacriligious".

In a letter being circulated to European and North American churches, General Secretary Desmond Tutu of the South African Council of Churches says there is massive starvation, family disruption and other suffering among the country's black majority because of the white-minority government's race-separation policies. He adds that South African blacks are embittered and disillusioned, and unless there is rapid change, a bloodbath is inevitable which would spark World War III.

The first round of official theological dialogue between USA Lutherans and Baptists has ended. Participants said the 30-month effort was valuable in shedding light on stereotypes each group has of the other and in highlighting the strengths and insights of each tradition. Throughout the discussions, differences in the understanding of baptism repeatedly cropped up.

Two United Methodist bishops have urged the USA administration to stop threatening military action in the Caribbean and Central America. Jesse DeWitt and Roy Nichols made their appeal following a request from the bishops who head the Methodist Church in Cuba and the Council of Evangelical Methodist Churches in Latin America.

"Because there may be extreme circumstances that warrant abortion and because we do not believe the constitution of the United States should reflect particular religious or sectarian points of view, we stand strongly opposed to a constitutional amendment designed to prohibit abortion", said US United Methodist bishops at their November meeting. Earlier, US Roman Catholic bishops voted support for an amendment which would permit states to decide abortion laws.

The seven Roman Catholic bishops of north Canada have protested parliamentary approval for a national constitution which eliminates special rights and recognition for the country's Indians and Eskimos. Hubert O'Connor, head of the Whitehorse diocese, said the government action "constitutes a direct betrayal of Canada's native peoples" and "illustrates a moral crisis we face in this country today".

A thousand Protestants opposed to the projected visit of Pope John Paul II to the UK next year took over the Anglican cathedral in Liverpool [6 December] for an hourlong protest. The regular congregation of about 80 gathered for evensong retired to a side chapel... And the Scottish Reformation Society says the pope's visit will cause trouble, not promote peace. It calls him a "hardliner in the authentic papal tradition, in spite of the flattering propaganda of the image-makers in the media", and urges prayer that "he may be brought to see that salvation is through faith in Christ alone".

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Ethiopian Lutheran church editor Duro Burje has been released from custody. He was arrested while trying to take pictures of the government takeover of the national headquarters of the Ethiopian Evangelical [Lutheran] Church Mekane Yesus last month. [EPS No.32, page 1; EPS No.33, page 6]. President Khotso Makhulu and General Secretary Maxime Rafransoa of the Nairobi-based All Africa Conference of Churches have expressed their shock and concern at the takeover.

The first anniversary of the deaths of four US missionaries in El Salvador [2 December] occasioned several religious protests of USA policy in Latin America.

About a score of Roman Catholics have reportedly been arrested in China for demonstrating a public preference for ties with the Vatican by refusing participation in activities of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the approved form of Roman Catholicism in the country, without Vatican links.

Ovadia Soffer, Israel's permanent representative to the United Nations in Geneva, has told the World Council of Churches that it is the "sincere wish of the government of Israel that all educational institutions in Judea and Samaria ... should pursue their normal work without interruption". The ambassador was replying to a WCC protest of the closing of Bir Zeit University following protests there of Israeli occupation of the area, [EPS No.32, page 3]. "Most students are unaffected by the occurrences at Bir Zeit", the letter says, because the other three institutions of higher learning in the area continue to function. It adds that Bir Zeit was closed reluctantly because of the student "disorder", and that the military authorities expect the university re-opening on 4 January.

The November synod of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has suggested that proposed changes in the country's Freedom of Religion Act should make it easier for children under 18 to officially have a religious affiliation different from that of their parents.

The synod also referred to the bishops' conference proposals having to do with the church's female lectors, theologically trained but unordained parish workers. Those who favour the ordination of women as pastors, not permitted in the ELCF, have indicated that expanding the responsibilities of lectors is not an approach they desire. The bishops' conference has scheduled a second seminar on aspects of women's ordination next April as part of an effort to increase church consensus on the question before it is presented again to the synod.

Reuters reports more and more Roman Catholic leaders in the USA are "urging the 50-million members of the American church, which has traditionally supported strong military forces, to join the movement against nuclear weapons".



## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The Canadian [Roman] Catholic Conference [of Bishops] has condemned the US decision to go ahead with the neutron bomb, which, it says, "offends the deepest sensibilities of humanity".

Back from a 10-day visit to Namibia, a delegation of the British Council of Churches says there is "appalling suffering" among the people there, especially in the war-torn areas of the North. The group's statement adds that church leaders in the South-African-ruled territory "made clear... their abhorrence of violence in any form and from whatever quarter, and their wish that life and property should be respected rather than abused as at present. We experienced at first hand the deep desire of the great majority of the people of Namibia for independence under a government elected fairly and freely". Also, "we... record the convictions of many to whom we spoke that they suffer far more from arbitrary actions by the security forces than from the guerillas".

More than half a century after biology teacher John Scopes was fined US\$ 100 in Tennessee because he disobeyed that US state's law against teaching evolution, a trial opened in Little Rock (Arkansas) [7 December] to test the validity of that state's requirement that evolution and "creation science" be given equal treatment in state classrooms. Opponents of the law say it unconstitutionally establishes religion.

The council of the Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil has decided to launch a campaign to involve its members in thinking about the connection between the international arms race and the misery of many people in the Third World. The denomination complains that the Brazilian armament industry is part of a "supermarket of weapons", and its profits -- estimated at US\$ 22 billion this year -- are at the expense of other sectors of the economy, such as agriculture.

The assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand has voted, 160-85, to have alternative investment plans for its funds prepared because the New Zealand South British group has financial links with South Africa. In another action, the assembly reaffirmed its stand against sporting contacts with South Africa until that country's system of white-minority rule is ended. In his address PCNZ Moderator Lawrie Hampton urged reconciliation in church and society following the divisions in the country which surfaced over the tour of the South African Springbok rugby team earlier this year.

Presiding Bishop John Allin of the [US] Episcopal Church says large international church gatherings such as the 1983 assembly of the World Council of Churches in Vancouver should be "evaluated with a cold eye", in light of rising costs and what some consider their questionable effectiveness. His counterpart, Archbishop Ted Scott of the Anglican Church of Canada, moderator of the WCC central committee, agreed that questions about such large assemblies should be raised but asked, "If it is not to be assemblies, what is the best way to relate internationally and regionally?" The two led delegations of Anglican bishops from the two countries who held their first joint meeting, in Mississauga (Ontario) Canada.

## ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

Theologically, Lutheranism stresses the gospel as God's gracious action to save sinners without reference to their works. But a recent survey of US Lutherans found that two-fifths of them agree with the view that the gospel is "God's rules for right living". The survey was sponsored by Aid Association for Lutherans, an insurer. It also found sizable differences of view on some theological issues between lay people and their pastors. Joseph Burgess, theological studies director for the Lutheran Council in the USA, said the results suggest that "in spite of our strong Lutheran emphasis on confirmation, our culture is making a greater impact than we are".

The formation of an "Association of Theological Schools and Institutions of the North" has been recommended by a conference of educators from Iceland, Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark at the Nordic Ecumenical Institute in Stigtuna, Sweden. The proposed association is described as a "small instrument for communication and contact... a forum or platform for dealing with theological and educational issues in ecumenical perspective."

EPS

## ECUTEXT: Message from Consultation of United and Uniting Churches\*

... Our Sri Lankan setting has reminded us of the contributions towards church union made by such pioneers as Metropolitan Lakdasa de Mel and Dr D.T. Niles. Their memory encourages us to persevere in the journey towards an incarnate, realized ecumenism that cuts across the barriers of confession, nationality, race, culture, sex and class.

We have been pleased to learn that, since our last meeting in 1975, new united churches have been formed (Australia and Italy), that previously united churches have successfully negotiated further unions (United Kingdom and Belgium), that progress towards union is being made in a number of negotiations, and that new initiatives are being taken in several parts of the world. We are also encouraged by the developments in mutual Christian understanding made possible through international conversations, both multi-lateral and bilateral...

We have learned of developing models of visible oneness - such as covenanting, "integration" and joint councils - which are proving to be valuable steps towards greater unity in particular situations.

Perhaps most importantly, we have challenged one another to expand our vision of what a united church can be. Our unity, we affirm, must encompass not only the various traditions - Protestant and Anglican - which have already entered into united churches, but also the Orthodox churches, the Roman Catholic Church, and the diverse life of charismatic and pentecostal witness... If it is Christ who lives in us (Gal. 2), then we can risk sharing our identity to gain new life. We have learned in Colombo that where churches have united and shared with others, they have not been impoverished, but enriched...

\*The fourth world consultation of united and uniting churches took place in Colombo, 18-25 November. [See EPS No.33, page 4]. This is excerpted from the participants' message at the close of their meeting. Copies of the full text of the message and the report of the consultation are available from the World Council of Churches faith and order secretariat.

EPS



ECUTEXT: Recommendations of the Consultation on the Humanity and Wholeness of Persons with Disabilities\*

Recommendations:

1. Churches, including ecumenical organizations such as the World Council of Churches, regional and national councils, should establish a department dealing with the concerns of disabled persons. Persons with disabilities or those knowledgeable about disabilities should be employed to direct such a department.
2. Churches should include disabled persons as full participants in their commissions and decision-making bodies.
3. Churches should be encouraged to provide competent counselling services at all levels for disabled persons, recognizing their physical, emotional, social and psychological needs resulting from the disabling trauma, whether of accidental or societal origin.
4. Theological institutions should not discriminate against the entrance of persons solely on the basis of their disabilities.
5. Theological curricula should include courses and practical training in dealing with the causes and effects of disabilities on both individuals and families.
6. All forms of independent living as advocated by international and national organizations for the disabled should be supported by the church and other interested bodies, in cooperation with governments throughout the world.
7. The continuing affirmation of the church should be that we are all one in Jesus Christ and that all people are declared whole persons through the work of Christ. We pray for the time when the church will no longer need to speak of able and disabled but all persons will rejoice together in the new life given in Christ.
8. Conditions which hinder the wholeness (fulfilment) of life (such as malnutrition, illiteracy, alcoholism, oppression) should be reaffirmed as disabling and meriting the churches' active concern.
9. Leaders of churches should examine with congregations the attitudes which determine the behaviour towards the disabled, especially those which hinder accessibility.

\*Story, page 1.

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ECUVIEW: Testimony of a Disabled Christian\*

Up to the age of 20 I worked, studied - led a normal life. Then I developed a disease of the spine. It was very serious. Soon I couldn't even sit in an upright position. For five years I did everything I could to fight it. But after each new operation I wasn't getting any better and I finally realized that there was no chance of living any other way than lying on my back.

As I had chosen to live for God, I said "yes" to God, not only accepting my changed life but also determined to work and to make my work have a meaning for others. I felt I had great possibilities as long as I could be available to people. And so I organized my new life - my life of survival.

I made contact with sick people in Sao Paulo and those visiting them. God helped me to listen, and as I am always in the same place and have time I listened to many people and learned to recognize their needs.

I started a home for single mothers, then a house for the babies of those mothers who didn't want to leave their children but had to work.

It was 1972 when I first met other disabled people and decided to work with and for them. So in Sao Paulo state I founded a branch of the Christian Fraternity of the Sick and Disabled, which is part of an international movement. First and foremost the fraternity helps us to recognise our worth as people. We bring disabled people to speak to our groups and we try to discuss our Christian faith in the light of their experiences.

Now I am the fraternity's coordinator for the whole of Brazil and we are presently preparing for a world meeting of the organization. Our work has always involved a struggle for our rights but we also keep in view all those in society who, like us, have been set aside.

We held a meeting where there were Indians, underprivileged people and ourselves. We noticed that the Indians and those living in very poor conditions had similar difficulties to ours. So we are trying to work with these marginalized people, not just thinking about ramps for sidewalks and access to city buildings...

\*Maria de Lourdes Guarda has been lying flat on her stretcher-bed for 34 of her 55 years, paralyzed from the waist down and partly encased in a plaster cast. With the help of a few volunteers and a telephone she coordinated preparations for the WCC Consultation on the Humanity and Wholeness of Persons with Disabilities from her hospital bed. This is her testimony, edited from the Portuguese, at the Consultation. Story, page 1.

ECUTEXT: Letter from International Ecumenical Workshop on Women in Church and Society\*

... There cannot be security in the absence of social justice. The nuclear balance between East and West, and the oppression of poor countries by the present economic order is the kind of peace which Jesus calls the peace of this world, whereas he brings a peace based on justice and loving care for all.

We worried not only about the future victims of a nuclear war, but the tears of one sister moved us to see that already today the testing of nuclear weapons has destroyed water, food and health of her people in the Pacific Islands. People in many areas of the world have never had a chance to choose life. They lack the very basic human necessities.

As signs of our destructive world order we saw the use of food production for sheer profits, the use of farmland in poor countries for the production of luxury food products for the rich nations by food multinationals, the devastating effect of advertizing to create artificial needs even amongst the poorest, and the political vulnerability of countries depending on food aid.

We clearly discovered the close interlinkage of these developments in the North and South since more and more money is used for arms production and purchases and less and less is available for people's basic needs.

We saw the interdependence in many unexpected areas, when we heard about the problems of New Zealand's participation in the Middle East peace-keeping forces, because its high export of sheep meat to Iran might be negatively affected by this. We also identified the relation between the transnational corporations coming from the USA and Europe who go to Asia for cheap labour. Most of these employ women workers who carry a double burden of being oppressed as women and as workers.

We discovered that the development of sex tourism of European and Japanese men to Asia, which benefits the tourist industry at the expense of many women, has something to do with the emancipation movement of women...

We were greatly concerned that the Bible is often abused in a pagan way to worship all kinds of false Gods like money, material wealth, race and other idols. Selfish individualistic interests are often justified by quoting Biblical passages out of their historical contexts. By splitting the world in material and spiritual halves, many Christians escape their responsibility for the world...

As those who want to be peacemakers, we committed ourselves:

- 1) to strengthen and expand peace-education on all possible levels and areas, taking into consideration that in each specific context the sources of injustice and violence must be clearly identified, the concepts of security investigated and the question of social justice never isolated from questions of the arms race.
- 2) to look into the teaching of the churches related to peace, and denounce all interpretations of the Bible which inhibit people from participating in the struggle for justice and active engagement in peace work.
- 3) to build stronger networks between peace-workers in all parts of the world. Such networks should be built around issues. To strengthen the mutual concern for marginalized people, disarmament, the environment, social justice and human rights we support each other with information and encouragement...

As Christian women we must not isolate ourselves in the traditional "women's corner", but participate fully in the whole life of the church and the world and create greater awareness amongst church women on social and political issues and their relatedness to our faith. In having experienced discrimination as women we are concerned that nobody be discriminated against because of sex, race or class...

In our workshop we had baby Eric in our midst. This two month old child taught us by his presence to see that the future of the present and next generation is at stake. Peace-makers have no easy life. They live often in conflict with the forces of evil, are suspected and may even lose their life.

We looked at the troubled and often ugly face of our world. But we also celebrated our community and the presence of God's empowering spirit. We helped each other to deepen our commitment to follow Christ and work for a world without hunger and without arms...

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\* Under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, a group of 28 people, mostly women, met in Nassau, Bahamas, 28 November - 6 December, under the theme "Choose Life - Work for Peace". This is an excerpt of the group's message.



ECUVIEW : Brief Excerpts from the Testimony at the World Council of Churches International  
Public Hearing on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament \*

"Nuclear weapons are contradictory to the dignity of human beings and violate basic human rights. We must say that the nuclear weapon as such is the Absolute Evil, and therefore it must be delegitimized and eradicated from the earth."  
(Mitsuo Okamoto, professor of philosophy, Shikokugakuin Christian University, Tokyo)

"The identity of the church is really at stake in the question of whether it is permissible for political ends to sacrifice the lives of countless innocent people and even the future of our planet... For the sake of our common future, the policy of deterrence must be replaced by the policy of confidence building."  
(Günter Krusche, dozent for practical theology, Sprachenkonvikt, Berlin)

"There is no question about the uses that nuclear and other modern technologies can be put in order to further humanization and development in Africa. But the threshold that separates such uses from the manufacture of lethal weapons of destruction bristles with moral and ethical dilemmas."  
(Burgess Carr, visiting lecturer, Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA)

"There is a great fear among large segments of the European population today. They are suddenly beginning to realize what a war in Europe should mean... Europe is a battlefield. It is prepared for war, and is being more and more prepared through more and more [Soviet] SS-20s and [American] cruise missiles... It is the most equipped battlefield in the history of mankind, with thousands of nuclear weapons on each side, aimed at intensely populated areas. No wonder that people are frightened."  
(Olof Palme, former prime minister of Sweden)

"The one situation more dangerous and more fraught with injustice than a balance of terror is a monopoly of terror. The unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons may be a rational and ethically responsible act for some nations. It is not a political possibility for all nations."  
(Roger Shinn, professor of social ethics, Union Seminary, New York)

"I am convinced that very many protesters believe that we have at this moment in Europe the chance to make a big step forward to a new security system in Europe, which gives more security and more freedom, justice and peace to all the people of Europe together. It is the most important task for the west European peace movements in the near future to develop a political concept for the future of Europe and to describe the steps which will bring this future nearer."  
(Ben ter Veer, leader of the Inter-Church Peace Council (IKV), Netherlands)

"The [South African] apartheid regime equipped with nuclear weapons presents the single greatest threat to international peace and security and it is in everyone's interest to act with a great sense of urgency for time is short."  
(Abdul Samad Minty, World Campaign against Militarism and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa, Oslo)

"Preaching to Third World nations about dangers of horizontal proliferation is sheer hypocrisy and diversionary tactics. If the industrialized nations talk of warfighting doctrines, vest nuclear weapons with prestige and surround them with a mystique, and attempt to continuously convert their nuclear arsenals into a kind of current of international power, it will be perfectly logical and legitimate for major Third World nations to defend their newly won sovereignty with acquisition of nuclear weapons."  
(K. Subrahmanyam, director, Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi)

"Barring a near-term resolution of outstanding issues in the Arab-Israeli dispute, or a highly improbable drastic turn by the world's leading states towards active nuclear disarmament (of an order of magnitude akin to George Kennan's 50 percent cut proposal), nuclearization of the Middle East is in my judgment practically inevitable..."  
(Paul Jabber, professor of Middle East Studies, University of California, Los Angeles)

"I would, taking everything into account, venture to maintain that the strategic slogan: 'Free the world of nuclear weapons, and first free all our own country' implies a responsible historical decision which is closer than any others to the demands of the Gospel."  
(Edward Schillebeeckx, professor of systematic theology, University of Nijmegen, Netherlands)

\* Stories: This EPS, page 5; EPS No.33, pages 1 & 2.

# EPS

## Ecumenical Press Service

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No.35/48th Year 1981

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The aim of Ecumenical Press Service is to keep its readers informed of trends of thought and opinion in and about the churches and Christian movements. It is not responsible for opinions expressed in its news items. EPS may be freely reproduced in any form with acknowledgment.



## SHOPTALK

Last year, a special committee of religion journalists evaluated EPS and prepared what has come to be called a mandate for its future.

A new EPS editor arrived in the middle of this year, and has begun to implement the mandate's vision. EPS readers have noted some changes already. Others are projected for the months ahead.

The debut of a new EPS design and colour is planned for the first issue of the new year, to mark this ongoing evolution. Also, the numbering of individual stories, bits, view, texts, and other items will be changed to make reference easier. (The three-part code indicates year, month, and number of the item that month. For example, 82.04.13 will identify the 13th item published in April 1982).

In addition, each issue of EPS will be identified by a period of time, usually a week, and by a code indicating the year of publication (1982 is the 49th) and the number of the issue that year. (E.g. 49-17 will be the 17th EPS in 1982).

Because the editor is in Lima to cover the triennial meeting of the WCC faith and order commission in January, the first issues of the new year will cover longer periods.

EPS is first and mostly a printed news service of the ecumenical movement. But the editor and his WCC colleagues with other journalistic responsibilities are ready to respond to requests for special coverage in particular circumstances. Just let us know. Comments and suggestions to make EPS more journalistically useful are also most welcome.

Thomas Hartley Dorris

Editor

December 1981

STATEMENT ON POLAND BY WCC GENERAL SECRETARY PHILIP POTTER (14 December)

We are deeply concerned about the escalation of events in Poland, in which the Polish authorities have felt compelled to declare a state of martial law, with the suspension of civil and political rights.

We underline our conviction that the crisis in Poland is and should remain a matter internal to Poland, which the people and the government of Poland must be allowed to solve without interference from outside.

We profoundly hope that dialogue will take the place of confrontation and that a peaceful resolution can be found to ease the tensions and to lift as rapidly as possible the dangerous state of martial law. In this we support the reconciling efforts of the churches in Poland and pray for wisdom and strength for their leaders, especially Archbishop Glemp, whose fervent appeal to reason and dialogue is the only constructive approach.

EPS

ECUBITS: News in Brief from Church and Secular Sources

The US navy secretary has rejected church requests that a nuclear submarine named after the Texas city of Corpus Christi be called something else. [See EPS No.34, page 6]. John Lehman cited Augustine and Thomas Aquinas as support for the view that a nation may maintain arms for its defence. He also suggested that the name, Latin for "body of Christ", would remind military personnel of the "humanistic values of peacekeeping".

According to a new 175-page pastoral letter from Pope John Paul II, marriages between Roman Catholics and persons of other Christian traditions contain elements "that if developed could well be made more use of, both for their intrinsic value and for the contribution they can make to the ecumenical movement". Other sections of the document reaffirm Roman Catholic teaching on the indissolubility of marriage and the impossibility of divorced Roman Catholics who remarry being allowed to receive holy communion. It also reiterates rejection of abortion, premarital sex, and methods of birth control considered artificial.

A museum honouring the memory of UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjold was opened in November in the Zambia copperbelt town of Ndola, near where the Swedish diplomat's plane crashed under mysterious circumstances 20 years ago. Markings, his reflections on his life and work published after his death, has become a noted work of contemporary Christian spirituality.

A Roman Catholic and a Eastern Orthodox leader of the Boston region, an area of US Albanian concentration, have appealed for religious freedom for Christians and Muslims in the Balkan nation whose communist government has vigorously worked to ban religion there. The [28 November] appeal was co-signed by Humberto Medeiros, cardinal archbishop of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, and Mark Lipa, bishop of the Boston-based Albanian Orthodox Dioces of America. Most Christian Albanians are Catholic or Orthodox.

EPS



ECUVIEW: The Church in El Salvador\*

The Christian churches in El Salvador are playing a constructive role in the present situation -- in analysis of the current reality and its root causes, in the provision of spiritual and legal assistance, in furnishing humanitarian aid to the suffering and in the search for a just and peaceful political and social order.

The Roman Catholic Church is under increasing attacks, misrepresenting its work and threatening physical harm and even death to clergy and lay leadership alike. The campaign has been stepped up during the past month.

All Christian churches in El Salvador, despite immense difficulties which include the assassination, disappearance, and imprisonment of leaders and members of many congregations, are witnessing magnificently to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Adversity has driven them to the roots of the Gospel. The churches' ministry -- prophetic and pastoral, challenging and compassionate, reflective and reconciling -- takes on a compelling immediacy.

We were impressed by the youth of many of the church leaders, and by the prominence of lay persons in the churches' witness. The unbiblical dichotomy between evangelization and social witness is resolved as the needs of the nation elicit a powerful ministry for justice and reconciliation.

We thank God for the Christian community of El Salvador, and we believe it calls us to a more relevant witness in the United States, a witness of biblical and theological depth in which we too often fail to engage. In El Salvador it is evident that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is indeed redemptive and liberating.

The Christian churches of El Salvador do not just talk about cooperation; they live it. Evangelical groups are working with CARITAS, a Roman Catholic agency. Baptists cooperate closely with Roman Catholics in ASESAN, the relief agency which the World Council of Churches and Church World Service support. The Student Christian Movement membership cuts across denominations.

Amazingly, many churches seem to be revitalized by current suffering and persecution. In some churches membership is growing. The congregations we visited were well attended. In the Roman Catholic church persons seeking Christian vocations are growing in number.

The martyrdom and memory of the late Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero is a powerful force of inspiration and example for the Christians of El Salvador, Protestant and Roman Catholic alike, referred to constantly. We give thanks for his remarkable ministry to the church and the nation, focussed primarily on the poor and the oppressed.

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\*

\*This is an excerpt from a report by a nine-person delegation from the [USA] National Council of Churches. The group spent half a week in San Salvador, the country's capital, in late October. [Related story, EPS No.32, page 4].

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	:	All Africa Conference of Churches
ACC	:	Australian Council of Churches
ACIS	:	Africa Church Information Service
ANC	:	African National Congress
BCC	:	British Council of Churches
CCIA	:	Commission of the Churches on International Affairs
CCPD	:	Commission of the Churches' Participation in Development
CEC	:	Conference of European Churches
CICARWS	:	Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service
CLAI	:	Latin American Council of Churches
CWME	:	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
DFI	:	Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies
ECLOF	:	Ecumenical Church Loan Fund
EDCS	:	Ecumenical Development Cooperative
EKD	:	Evangelical Church in Germany
ELTSA	:	End Loans to Southern Africa
EECMY	:	Ethiopian Evangelical Church : Mekane Yesus
FPC	:	Federation of Protestant Churches
FRG	:	Federal Republic of Germany
FSPC	:	Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches
GDR	:	German Democratic Republic
HEKS	:	Relief Agency of the Swiss Protestant Federation
JWG	:	Joint Working Group
LWF	:	Lutheran World Federation
MECC	:	Middle East Council of Churches
NCCC	:	National Council of Churches in Christ in the USA
PAC	:	Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
PCR	:	Programme to Combat Racism
PTE	:	Programme on Theological Education
SACC	:	South African Council of Churches
SACTU	:	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SODEPAX	:	Committee on Society, Development and Peace
SWAPO	:	South-West Africa People's Organizations
TNCs	:	Transnational Corporations
UNHCR	:	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WACC	:	World Association for Christian Communication
WARC	:	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
WMC	:	World Methodist Conference
WSCF	:	World Student Christian Federation
YMCA	:	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	:	Young Women's Christian Association



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ECUDATES: Some World Council of Churches Events in 1982\*

2-16 Jan.	Lima	Triennial Plenary: Faith and Order Commission
15-18 Feb.	Venice	Consultation: Councils of Churches in the Ecumenical Movement
15-19 Feb.	Geneva	Semi-Annual Meeting: WCC Executive Committee
22-25 Feb.	Bossey	Consultation: Ecumenical History
23-24 Feb.	Geneva	Meeting: WCC/Vatican Joint Consultative Group
25 March-3 April	Bossey	Workshop: Local, Ecumenical Dimensions of Worship
28 March-2 April	Colombo	Meeting: Christian/Muslim Dialogue
March		Consultation (Middle East) : Faith, Science, Technology
5-18 April	Bossey	Consultation: Orthodox Theology and Spirituality
14-17 May	Geneva	1983 WCC Assembly Preparations Committee
22-18 May	Bulgaria	Consultation (East Europe) : Ecumenical Sharing of Resources
May or June	Budapest	Consultation (East Europe) : Faith, Science, Technology
May	Lusaka	Consultation: Churches' Involvement in Southern Africa
5-12 June	Moscow	Meeting: WCC Communication Commission
20-29 June	Bossey	Consultation: Education for Effective Ecumenism
29 June-6 July	Ibadan	Consultation: Christian Lay Centres Participants
16-18 July	Geneva	Semi-Annual Meeting: WCC Executive Committee
19-28 July	Geneva	Annual Meeting: WCC Central Committee

\*Dates and places are subject to change. Additions and deletions are likely in the course of the year. A longer list, including other WCC meetings of a more routine or specialized nature, is available on request.







